

## SPbPU Representative Told about Internship in Italy

International experience exchange is one of the most important aspects in the university development. Under Erasmus+ program Deputy Director for international activity of the Institute of Energy and Transport Systems (IETS) E.A. Sokolova had two weeks internship at Polytechnic University of Turin. There she had a rich educational and cultural program. Today in our interview: about laboratory in the Alps, the Architecture Faculty of the Polytechnic University of Turin in the Castle of Valentino, the reasons why all the diesel cars were stopped in Turin, and many other interesting facts!



### **- Ekaterina, how did you decide to take part in the Erasmus+ program?**

- It all started with introductory visit of SPbPU representatives to Polytechnic University of Turin. We went there with our colleagues. We visited laboratories, had some meetings and discussions. Then some professors from Polytechnic University of Turin came to SPbPU to give lectures to the students of [International Polytechnic Winter](#) and [Summer schools](#). Also there was a student exchange program between two universities. So one day we decided to submit a joint Erasmus+ application and had a success. The grant also provided an internship for administrative staff

representative, and as far as I work in a field of various international activities Turin.

**- How long have you been in Turin? Did you have a rich program?**

- I've had a two weeks internship. In most of the cases it was in an International office of Polytechnic University of Turin. Before my arrival I have got a program, which was full of different activities. Every member of International Office had a meeting with me. People told about their responsibilities, the programs they used in their work, and also shared their experience with me. It was very interesting and informative. Also there were some visits to the laboratories and meetings with different research groups. So my internship had not only administrative, but also a scientific component.

**- What was the most remarkable?**

- Probably it was the visit to the laboratory which is located in the Alps. Now I am working on my Ph.D. thesis. It is about drying pellets (wood fuel granules. – Note. Ed.). In the Alps there is special equipment for desiccation of wood. Italy is one of the largest importers of pellets and briquettes for home heating. The woods in Turin are mainly in the mountains, so forest harvesting is very expensive there. That is why it is easier to buy wood from overseas. Experts in Italy make researches how to reduce the cost of forest harvesting in the country, and how dry the wood so that its use was most productive. They use, for example, renewable sources of energy.

**- Was there something unusual in Italy?**

- For me it was surprising that experts in Italy regularly measure Exposure Limits in Air. It is constantly monitored, and in every region, including in Turin, there are checkpoints. When concentration of harmful substances exceeds the permissible limits, they begin to stop certain kinds of transport. For example, when I was in Turin, there were banned diesel cars. Moreover, if within 20 days the performance had not been decreased to a certain level, gasoline cars would also have been stopped.

**- Were diesel cars banned forever?**

- Of course not! When concentration of harmful substances descends to the safe level, the drivers can use them. As I was explained, Turin is located on the Apennine Peninsula and surrounded by the Alps, so winds there are a very rare thing. The air is polluted, and some citizens are even wear masks. People there are very concerned about environmental issues, many projects, including the University, dedicated to energy conservation and efficiency, green technology, wind turbines, solar panels, because all of this is vital.

**- What also did you see in Turin?**

- Turin is a city with magnificent architecture. I really liked the Architecture Faculty

of the Polytechnic University of Turin which is located in the Castle of Valentino. This castle is included in the list of the five most popular tourist attractions of the region. Some centuries ago it was the residence of Italian Royal Family Savoy, and today there are modern computers, and people work on them. In my opinion, it is very unusual!

**- Very soon students from all over the globe will come to the International Polytechnic Winter School. Will professors from Polytechnic University of Turin take part in this event?**

- Yes, every year we invite experts from Italy, and in International Polytechnic Winter School there will take part the Professor from Polytechnic University of Turin, who will tell about renewable energy: sun, wind, etc.

**- Will there be something new in the Winter school in 2018?**

Yes, there are a lot of new things. For example, we cooperate with Students' Club "Adapters" for the first time. It is a large consortium of students who help international students to get used to life in Russia. They came up with a lot of events - such as the photo quest in St. Petersburg, sightseeing evening tour around the city, a tour around the University campus in a completely new format. Also we will have speaking clubs, an evening dedicated to the cultures of different countries, a joint team project. Also there will be trips to the Leningrad Nuclear Power Plant and other leading companies and organizations of energy industry, visiting professors, speakers from different companies.

**- Ekaterina, thank you for the interview! We wish you success in your work!**

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