

A semester in Poland: a Polytechnic student about participation in the Erasmus+ project

Georgy KASHIN from the Institute of Computer Science and Technology at SPbPU went to Poznan Technical University (Poland) for the fall semester. The study took place within the [Erasmus+ project](#). Read about who is suitable for studying at the Polish university, peculiarities of university classrooms and a distinctive feature of public transport in Poznan in our interview.



— **Georgy, tell us why you decided to take part in the Erasmus+ project?**

— I was curious to know how studying at European universities works. Therefore, when I learned about the possibility for students of Polytechnic University to go to study abroad, I decided to try. Preparing for the trip was easy, but I had to deal with the visa.

— **How was the trip to the university? Do you remember your first impressions of the new country?**

— It took me a long time to get to my new university, the flight alone took 22 hours — I had to change planes in Helsinki. Then I took two trains from Warsaw to Poznan. Everything was unusual and very interesting. Probably the first thing that surprised me when I landed in Poland was that everyone spoke different

languages. Some in Polish, some in English, and some in Russian.

— Were there any difficulties with adaptation in the new place?

— Adapting was easy enough. In any situation, you can use the question in English: «Could you please tell me...?» They will try to help you if possible. Generally speaking, life in Poland is not very different from life in Russia. If you walk down the street and don't talk to anyone, you think you've never gone anywhere. So if you are having trouble adapting to a new place, but would like to go and study abroad, Poland would be an excellent option.

— What are your impressions of the dormitory and the campus of the Technical University of Poznan in general?

— I have only positive impressions of the dormitory, even though the cost of living there is 10 times higher than here. It has its kitchen, bathroom, everything is clean, neat and comfortable. The main university building was built not so long ago, it looks nice and modern. Of the things that seemed unusual — almost all the classrooms are separated from the corridors by the glass, so you can see everything that happens around.

— Was there anything that surprised you about your new university?

— Of course, at first it was unusual. A new language, new people, not sure how to communicate with the teachers. But now everything seems normal, the learning process is not much different from ours. We found a common language with the lecturers and students without any problems, they were all very friendly. There is an interesting thing that is probably very difficult for Russian students to understand: here you can not pass two labs to choose from and still get the highest grade. Clearly, you shouldn't abuse this!

— How is your education during the pandemic?

— We study at a university, online lectures are only for large groups and only where everyone speaks Polish. The mask regime is quite strictly enforced.

— What do you think about Poznan?

— The city is very quiet and small compared to St. Petersburg. At first, I was not used to the fact that every day the bell tolls at noon sharp. Separately, I want to tell you about the public transportation system, it's very well developed here, and all the streetcars and buses have their distinctive color — green.



— What do you see as the benefits of participating in exchange programs?

— For myself, I identified three key benefits. The first is an opportunity to practice English and start learning a new language (in my case — Polish). The second one is to see how they teach abroad, the level of education, different methods, approaches, etc. And, of course, it's an opportunity to see another country, culture, new people.

— What advice would you give to students who also want to go to study abroad?

— The most important thing is to understand why you need it. Without a doubt, do not take part in an exchange program just because of the scholarship. However, if you have a goal to enter, for example, a master's degree program at a foreign university, such a program is a great opportunity to find out what awaits you in a longer study, and help prepare for it.

Prepared by the SPbPU International Office

Дата публикации: 2022.02.18

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