

A student from Colombia talks about studying in the international Master's degree program at SPbPU

Miguel Montana came to Russia from Colombia. Now Miguel is studying for a master's degree at the Institute of Computer Science and Technology. His choice is the international educational program «Intelligent Systems». About the decision to come to Russia, the search for a university and an educational direction, as well as about the difficulties of adaptation and favorite places in St. Petersburg read in our interview.



— **Now you study Master's degree program. What did you study before? What university did you study?**

— Previously I studied mechatronics engineering as my undergraduate degree at the pilot university of Colombia, Bogota.

— **When did you realize that you want to study abroad?**

— When I was starting my fourth year of university, around 2018, I had the opportunity to attend a study abroad fair, I saw all the opportunities and benefits that this has, so at that time I set a goal to study a master's degree abroad.

— **Why did you decide to study in Russia?**

— By the time I was finishing my undergraduate degree, a family acquaintance was planning to leave the country, so he told us that his destination was Russia, a country about which I did not have much information, so I took the task of researching and I found a lot of positive things, therefore I decided to undertake my study of Russian and apply for a scholarship, which I won, thus having the full opportunity to go to Russia.

— **Where did you find information about Russian universities? Why did you decide to apply to Polytech?**

— The main place where I found information was the website [StudyInRussia](#), where I was able to find a lot about costs, quality, programs, from then on the rest of the information was found directly on the university websites. For example, I found a lot of information on the SPbPU website along with its social media, there was all kinds of information, from the programs available, to the experience of studying at Polytech. I decided to choose this university because of the affinity of its master's degrees with my study objective, as well as the possibility of studying in English in international programs.

— **Was it difficult to decide to study in a new country? Do you remember your first impressions when you arrived to Russia?**

— Not really, as I had been thinking about it for many years, it was quite an enjoyable process. The first city I came to in Russia was Moscow, I was totally impressed by its infrastructure and how massive it is. I have only very good impressions of the city. Then when I arrived in St. Petersburg, I was amazed by its architecture, culture and the art present everywhere.

— **How did you get used to live in a new country?**

— It was actually a much simpler process than expected, many things surrounding the way of life in Russia were quite simplified thanks to the information given by the university and the government, so from my point of view it was a bit easier process.

— **Were there any difficulties (problems) in the beginning of your living? How did you cope with them?**

— The first difficulties I encountered were the language and living with my roommate. Although I had already studied Russian, it was an online process, so when I arrived in the country it was something completely different, but by taking it up again and with the help of my new friends and classmates I was adapting and getting a better level of the language. As for my roommate, at the beginning I didn't have one, but it was something that worried me, to know if he was going to know English or Russian, or maybe Spanish, would we have good communication? These were things that gave me uncertainty, but in the end when he arrived, being able to talk to him about all this in the first days and organize the

tasks in the room led us to have a great coexistence, now we are great friends.

— **Were there any things which seemed strange for you in Russia? Or something that surprised you?**

— I was surprised by the wide avenues, the large sidewalks, and the public space, which also surprises and pleases me.

— **How did your student's life at Polytech begin?**

— I started my studies at Polytech online, but it was all very good, no matter that it was distance learning, it was inclusive and there was a very nice connection.

— **What are your plans for the future?**

— My short-term plans are to finish my master's degree and to be able to start working either in Russia or in my country.

— **What do you usually do in your free time? Do you have any favorite places in St. Petersburg? Are there any places in St. Petersburg you'd recommend everyone to visit?**

— Normally I spend my free time walking around downtown and seeing new places all over St. Petersburg, but my favorite place is the city center. A place I love and which is close to St. Petersburg is Pushkin, I love the palace, the park is unique and the nature surrounding the place is simply magical.

— **Would you recommend other international students to study at Polytech?**

— Coming to study at Polytech is an experience that I would highly recommend.

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