

Elizabeth Lang, a student who came to the International Polytechnic Summer School

Elisabeth LANG is one of the few students of the [International Polytechnic Summer School](#) who was able to come to St. Petersburg and study in the so-called "hybrid" format. She attended the lectures online, but had the opportunity to get acquainted with the city and see many of its attractions in person. At Polytech, Elisabeth studied two programs at once: [“Machine Learning: Theory and Application”](#) and [“Intensive Course in the Russian Language and Culture.”](#) In an interview with international services of SPbPU Elisabeth LANG told why she chose these particular areas for study, shared how she could dare to travel at such a difficult time and gave useful advice to future students.



- Elizabeth, where did you find information about the International Polytechnic Summer School?

- On the website of my university. I study at the Graz University of Technology in Austria. By the way, TU Graz and St. Petersburg Polytechnic are partner institutions, I know that. On the website of my university information about additional courses and internships appears regularly. That's how I found out about the International Polytechnic Summer School and decided to take part in it.

- Was it scary coming to Russia during the pandemic?

- I won't deny that, it was scary. Many people discouraged me from going. Before I left I had a vaccination procedure, which made me feel safer. It was very important for me to come to Russia now. I wanted to do it last year, I chose programs to study, but then because of epidemiological constraints, I could not come. After we studied a few more semesters online, I realized that I needed a change of scenery and to see something other than my room. That's how I ended up here, and of course, keeping all the necessary safety precautions.

- Tell me more about what you studied at Polytechnic University?

- I chose two programs - machine learning and the Russian language. At my university, I studied the Python programming language for a semester, so I already had a certain base. I wanted to get a deeper knowledge of this subject. As for the Russian language, I was very interested in learning its peculiarities, in particular, to learn more about some grammatical aspects.



- Like what?

- I understand Russian quite well, much better than I can speak it. For example, I often think about which ending to put in a word, I occasionally make mistakes, but I can't independently determine which ones. As part of my training at Polytechnic University, I studied B1 level Russian, where many points of interest to me were

emphasized. I liked the way you teach Russian. We had a fairly young teacher who created a very friendly and cheerful atmosphere in the classes and shared a lot of useful materials with us. The course is excellent, the level of teaching completely satisfied me.

- And how many languages do you speak on the whole?

-; At school I studied French and Latin, I speak English, a little bit of Russian and of course German.

- Tell us, what do you study in Austria? How do you think the International Polytechnic Summer School programs can help you?

At my university in Austria, I'm studying civil engineering. In fact, both programs that I studied at SPbPU have a connection to my main field of study. For example, in civil engineering, programming is becoming more and more important every year. With the help of special software, you can plan and design buildings and infrastructure facilities. Knowledge of languages will also be very useful when working on an international site.



- Why did you decide to come specifically to Russia?

- I had personal motives - my mother was born in Russia, so it was important for me to be here. I had already been to Russia once, but at that time I was five or six

years old and I don't remember much. I had heard great things about St. Petersburg, the architecture, the views, the rivers and canals, the drawbridges, I wanted to see it all. So I decided to come here.

- What did you want to see most in St. Petersburg?

- Probably the thing I wanted to see most was how they draw the bridges at night. We went on a night excursion and watched it from the water. Then I went to Vyborg, to Kronstadt. And I also wanted to go to the subway and see how it works. I read that the St. Petersburg metro is the deepest in the world in terms of the average depth of the stations.

- How long have you lived here? Have you had time to visit everything you had planned?

- I've been living in St. Petersburg for about four weeks. Of course, it's impossible to see everything you want to see here within that time. Even my mother, who was born and lived in St. Petersburg, hasn't been to all the museums here. It seems to me that when you are going to come to St. Petersburg to study, you should definitely plan your time so that you have time to visit as many sights as possible. Allocate at least a few days for that!



- How quickly did you get used to life in the new city?

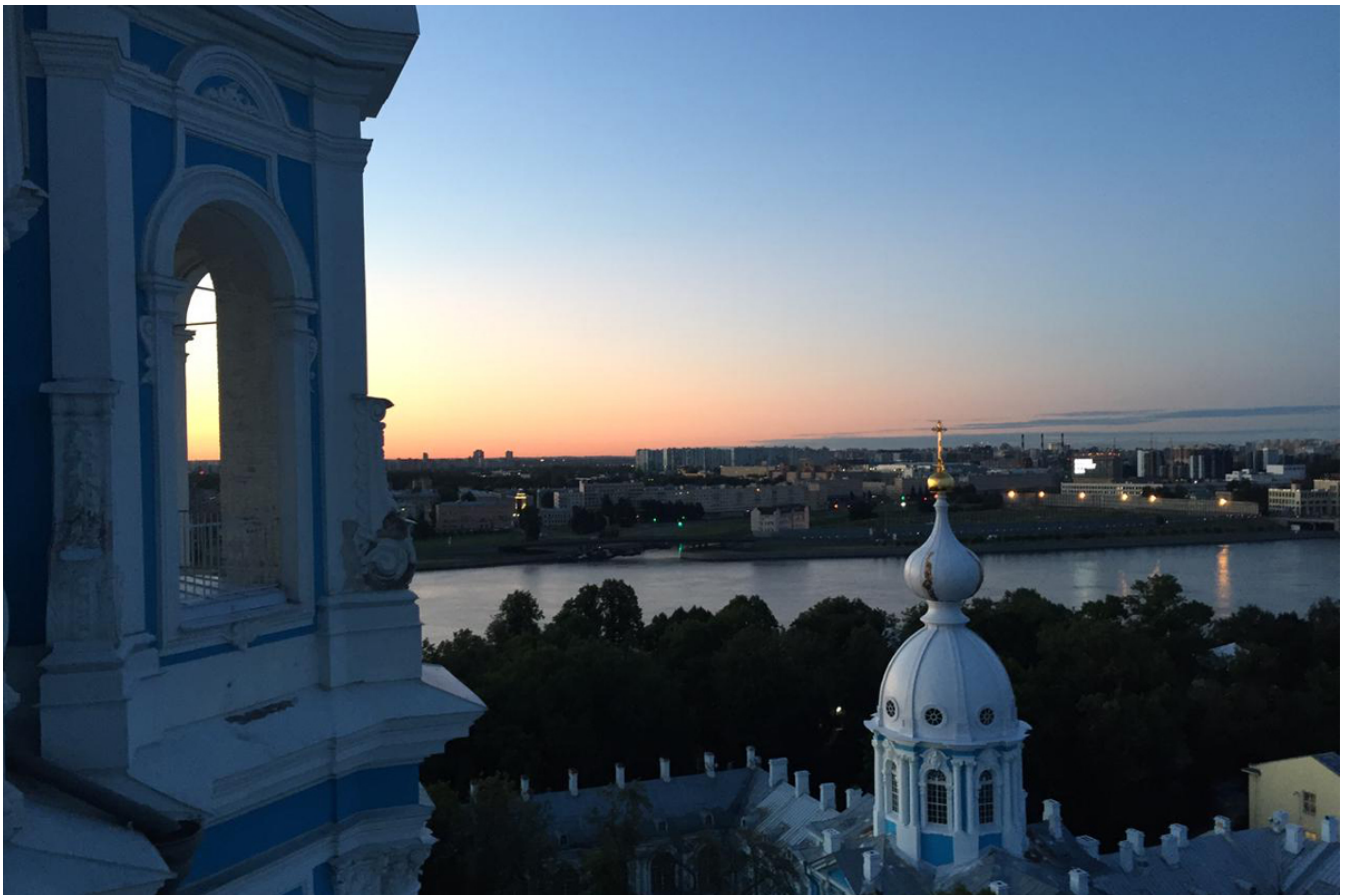
- I definitely like living here. At first, I had to get used to the wide avenues, tall buildings, and noisy streets, but that passed quickly. People in St. Petersburg are very approachable, if there are any questions, they are always ready to help.

- Do you remember your first impressions upon arrival?

- I remember that I was just happy that, despite all the difficulties, I still managed to arrive and land without any problems. And then everything was very fast. The tutors met me, helped me pass the PCR test, and checked me into my dorm. Then we spent a lot of time together.

- By the way, what are your impressions of the dorm?

- Everything is clean and tidy. We were warned in advance that we should take many things with us - for example, plates and some kitchen utensils. So we were ready for that. The administration, guards were very responsive and tried to help us with everything.



- What advice would you give to students who, like you, decide to go to study abroad?

- Prepare for it in advance. If it is possible and there are no contraindications, it is better to be vaccinated. Being in public places, wear a mask and use antiseptics, keep your distance. These are simple rules, but they are effective in keeping us

safe. Despite the pandemic, we need to understand that life goes on. And one more piece of advice that is not related to the pandemic: if you are going to St. Petersburg, it would be good if you took rubber boots with you. You don't joke about the rains here (laughs).

- Why do you think it's important for students to take part in international projects like this?

- To go beyond the boundaries of the usual way of life. To see something new. To get to know another culture, new people, to get to know their way of life. By the way, the chosen subject doesn't need to coincide with your future specialty at your home university. It's great when, without thinking about exams, you can study at a quiet pace in a line that interests you.

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