

Erasmus+ Program: Personal Experience of SPbPU Student. The University of the Basque Country (Part I)

Under the program Erasmus+ a Master's degree student in Energy efficiency and sustainable building of the Institute of Civil Engineering of SPbPU Vladislav BORSUK has studied at the University of the Basque Country (Spain) for a semester and on arrival shared his impressions with the representatives of SPbPU International Office. Read more details in our interview!



- Vladislav, why did you decide to take part in Erasmus+ program?

- I always had a desire to try my hand at studying abroad, but only on my master degree I had a real opportunity to take part in the Erasmus + competition. This grant allows you to fully focus on training, without worrying about the financial side of this issue, so I did not hesitate to submit my application for it.

- Why did you chose the University of the Basque Country?

- My choice was largely influenced by the fact that I had never been to this country before, but at the same time I was a longtime admirer of its history and

culture. In addition, the opportunity to learn one of the most common languages in the world was also very tempting. Therefore, for me the choice was quite simple.

- Were there any difficulties while preparation for leaving?

- During the preparation, I did not have any serious problems or difficulties, largely due to the good work of both our coordinators and the Spanish. The only negative part was the very long delivery of documents by Russian post. So, it made me a little nervous.

- Do you remember your impressions during first days in Spain?

- Obviously during first days I had a little shock, mixed with joyful excitement. Nevertheless, this is a new country where you do not know anyone, but at the same time it is a new opportunity to test yourself. In addition, I was lucky to study in San Sebastian, and this is an incredibly beautiful resort town on the ocean. So, my first impressions were definitely only positive.



- What was your first impression of the university?

- Regarding the university, I want immediately note the work of the Help center. It was very nice to see how much the people working there are worried about you and that they are always ready to help with any question. The university itself was

also impressive mostly because of its modern equipment (3D-printers, laser-cutting machines, etc.), to which any student has access, and the form of the courses. Most courses were practice-oriented with minimal restrictions on the way the assignment was completed.

- Were there any problems with adaptation to the new life?

- With the adaptation of the first two weeks there were some difficulties, due to the language barrier. It came as a big surprise to me that in Spain only a few people speak English. Therefore, I had to try to learn as quickly as possible the basics of the Spanish language, without which it is hard to imagine everyday life. But otherwise, it was very easy to adapt, because most exchange students are open to communication and are always ready to help you.

- What were the most memorable moments in the university life?

- Studying was one of the most memorable moments of my stay in Spain. During the training, I took part in a large number of interesting projects. The final goal of most of them was the creation of a real model. In addition, as I already said, we were poorly limited in the implementation of our projects, so during this time I think I was able to improve not only applied skills, but also my creativity. An important difference was that the lectures were quite rare and if they were then they contained information that could either help in the implementation of the project or inspire an idea.



- Let's speak about the landmarks of the country. Which if them did you like most of all?

- Basque country as a whole. In this small region in the north of Spain there is simply incredible nature. Two places deserve special mention - Zumaia with its unforgettable panoramas and flysches and San Sebastian. In this city, almost everything is beautiful from its beaches to small streets in the old part of the city. Incredible mountain panoramas, beautiful architecture reminiscent of Paris and of course restaurants where you can try food for every taste, all of these as well as possible describes San-Sebastian.

- Would you recommend other students to take part in Erasmus+ Program?

- I naturally recommend participating in this program, it is a great chance to get an unforgettable experience, improve your professional skills and expand your circle of acquaintances by people from a different cultural environment.

- Vladislav, thank you very much for a very interesting interview! Wish you good luck and new achievements!

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