

## Over 20 European universities discussed the future of academic mobility at Erasmus+ Teatime.

At the end of last week the International Office of Polytechnic University held the [Erasmus+ Teatime](#) event, which brought together representatives of more than 20 European universities. The event was held online as part of the Erasmus Days 2020 project with the support of national agencies Erasmus+ and the European Commission.

The key topic of discussion was international academic mobility in the context of the coronavirus pandemic: starting from March 2020, Russian and European colleagues faced new challenges, which took a lot of effort to overcome. Within Erasmus+ Teatime, Petersburg Polytechnic, Republican Sivas University (Turkey), Liepaja University (Latvia) and Beja Polytechnic University (Portugal) shared their experience. In total, over 20 universities from Germany, Spain, France, Turkey, Austria and other countries took part in the discussion.



*"During the pandemic, we faced several problems. Uncertainty, social isolation, parental anxiety, distance learning, returning home, medicine - this is by no means a complete list of what students were worried about. We tried to solve every*

*problem - we held regular orientation meetings online, volunteers communicated with parents and students, and the university provided assistance in technical support so that foreigners would have constant contact with home. To ease social isolation, we organized an online Turkish language club. And of course, we have been and continue to be in close contact with hospitals, consulates and embassies on various issues,"* said Emre SEVEN, representative of the Republican Sivas University.

*"In these challenging times, it is important to communicate the new rules quickly to all students. The University's international office was available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We were in touch with international students, assisted them in getting financial and technical support and immediately informed them about all new developments,"* said Erika LOBERGA from the University of Liepaja..

Beja Polytechnic Institute for the first time cooperates with SPbPU in academic exchanges. "We just started classes 3 weeks ago. Despite the pandemic, things are going quite optimistically in Portugal. Unfortunately, we do not accept as many students as we wanted and could, so we are very much looking forward to next semester. For everything to be normal, we need to follow safety rules - they are the same for everyone," stressed the representative of Beja Polytechnic Institute Maria Cristina PALMA.

All the panelists without exception spoke about the need for following the security measures. The coronavirus pandemic has significantly affected the number of participants in academic mobility programs. In order to go back to the previous figures and study or work safely at a foreign university, it is important to remain conscious and follow simple but efficient rules: to keep hands and surfaces clean, to wear a mask in public places, to refrain from attending public events. Like the Polytechnic University website, other universities have created sections on the following measures [preventing the spread of coronavirus infection](#) and [monitoring in relation with COVID-19](#).

Employees of the Polytechnic University International Office on daily basis receive questions from students and staff about when new competitions under the Erasmus+ scholarship programs will start. Given the current epidemiological situation in the country and in the world, it is very difficult to answer them: according to preliminary data, the next competition for the Erasmus+ scholarship program will be held in February 2021. All changes are immediately reported by the University staff in the relevant section of the Polytechnic University website.

To deliver information promptly, stay in touch, maintain contacts with foreign partners and always keep a positive attitude – such are the key points of work, about the importance of which spoke the participants of Erasmus + Teatime. "We are very pleased that even in such difficult times, international cooperation continues to develop, and we hope to visit Polytechnic University soon! Thank you very much for organizing this event and providing a platform for sharing experiences!" shared Erika LOBERGA (Liepaja University).

Prepared by the SPbPU International Office

Дата публикации: 2020.10.22

[>>Перейти к новости](#)

[>>Перейти ко всем новостям](#)