

Study in France, Austria and Belgium during the quarantine: stories of polytechnics

Not long ago we shared how SPbPU student is [studying at Leibniz University of Hanover \(Germany\)](#) during the quarantine period. She went there as within an international [Double Degree program](#). As well, we asked students who are now in France, Austria and Belgium and they told about polytechnic students' lives and studies in other countries. Nikhil MOKHANAN, Anna OZHIGOVA and Arina KALIMULLINA study at foreign universities within [the academic mobility programs](#). Here's what they said:

Nikhil MOKHANAN, SPbPU student École Polytechnique (France)

The École Polytechnique campus is closed until April 13. Classes are held with the help of the Zoom video conferencing platform. Meetings with my research supervisor were significantly reduced - we keep in touch by phone and email.

I believe that classroom training is vital for the correctly organized educational process. Despite the fact that we study in the format of online conferences, students mute microphones and do not communicate during lectures. Eye contact with the professor, of course, is also not possible.



Nevertheless, there are the advantages speaking about online classes: for example, you can record a lecture, and then listen again to the moments that were difficult to understand. The Zoom platform enables all participants in an online meeting to write their questions, draw objects on the so-called "whiteboard" - an interactive electronic board.

I spend my free time in front of the computer, listening to music, watching TV shows and playing games. I have almost read the book I took with me from home to France - I did not think that I would have time to read!

In all this incredible situation, it is very important to understand: the more you take care of yourself, the faster it will end. Make sure you follow personal hygiene rules, wash your hands and do not violate the regime of self-isolation. Imagine that Covid-19 is an extremely cold winter when you cannot go outside. But even the coldest frosts end sooner or later! Do not sit back - find a hobby, clean the room or try something new. And most importantly - do not lose heart, everything will definitely become better, and we will return to our ordinary life!

Anna OZHIGOVA, SPbPU student University of Applied Sciences Joanneum (Austria)

The situation at the university is stable, quarantine is announced. Even before it, sanitary facilities for visitors were provided in all buildings. Of course, live communication is hard to be replaced. Roommates and the Internet help to cope. We used to meet with classmates to prepare for classes - here a lot of attention is paid to team work - now we are together online.



Despite the fact that the situation is unusual for both students and teachers, the distance learning system worked at the university the very next day after quarantine was announced. There has long been an online learning platform, and teachers know how to use it. As an exchange student, at first it was hard for me, but now I am good at working with the course. If something is not clear, you can always ask classmates or a teacher - all contacts are available. Even lectures are delivered as usual - about 40 people get connected online. It's very cool to realize that the lecture will go without problems and you can listen with high interest to it! I think that after such an experience, the education system will undergo significant changes.

Of course, with the introduction of quarantine the city became empty. There are many restrictions; fines have been introduced. But this does not mean that there is nothing to do! It is allowed if you walk alone. And I realized that I get along very well with myself. I have more time to deal with time management, household things, reading and sports. And, of course, studying: now I have time to do the tasks that are given at SPbPU as well.

What I want to wish other students: do not be discouraged, follow the regime and follow hygiene rules to stay healthy and not to put others at risk. Keep in touch with family and friends, and do not forget about studying: now there is a great opportunity to make learning even more comfortable for yourself.

Arina KALIMULLINA, SPbPU student Ghent University (Belgium)

Like other universities, Ghent University is now in quarantine. The situation in the city is calm. We do not fall into panic, and just follow all the instructions. The university administration decided to switch to online education to ensure the safety of students and teachers. We are doing everything possible so that the learning process does not stop: classes are carried out in on-line mode and teachers quickly answer all the questions. As for the advantages I want to note the flexibility of deadlines and changes in requirements for students.



With the introduction of distance learning I leave home more rarely. There is much less live communication. However, I had a desire to help those in need during this difficult time. Therefore, I applied for a volunteer job. Also in my free time I work remotely, study and do my homework.

I would like to wish other students to take more care of others, help those who need help, if possible, and not despair!

by SPbPU International Office Text: Olga DOROFEEVA

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