

**Saint-Petersburg State University**  
**International Relations Office**

**EXCHANGE STUDENTS' REPORT**

Please complete this form and send it to Scientific and Academic Cooperation/Students Exchange Dept.  
nechaeva@ir.pu.ru, fax +7 /812/ 3240788. Thank you.

**TO BE FILLED OUT ELECTRONICALLY**

The international experience you have gained while the exchange period at St.Petersburg University is the unique practice you will remember all your life. It can also help other students when they are planning for their exchange. To make sure that prospective students have a chance to learn from your experience you are required to submit the **Exchange Students` Report**.

Please complete the form and **return by email to [nechaeva@ir.pu.ru](mailto:nechaeva@ir.pu.ru)**.

When filling in the returned student report try to remember the sort of things that you wanted to know before you went on exchange, be honest in your responses and try to avoid simply giving yes/no answers.

Please do not hesitate to contact Scientific and Academic Cooperation/Students Exchange Dept. staff if there are any issues you would like to discuss regarding your exchange experience.

<b>Name:</b>	Damla Diker
<b>Host faculty at SPSU</b>	Sociology
<b>Exchange Study Period</b>	6 months
<b>Home Institution</b>	Middle East Technical University

Do you give permission for prospective exchange students to contact you if they have questions? **Yes**

If yes, please give your preferred email address: [diker.damla@gmail.com](mailto:diker.damla@gmail.com)

## The Host University

What factors influenced your decision to select St.Petersburg State University?

My instructors advised me St.Petersburg State University.

How would you describe St.Petersburg State University?

It is old and big university.

Please describe the location of St.Petersburg State University (both Faculty and Administration building)

Faculty is next to Smolny Cathedral. Administration building is on the University Embankment.

Please describe the courses that you took while on exchange? What were their pros and cons?

I took three courses. Medium of instruction was English. I did not face any problem with language during the courses.

Did you take Russian language course? If so please describe its pros and cons?

University forwarded us an instructor for Russian courses. He could not offer us any program in conformity by price, level and time. Some students managed to take Russian courses for free. We were not allowed to take the same courses. We found another university which is called Gertzen. I offer students who want to take Russian courses that university. It is more organized and cheaper.

Did you find the academic staff helpful?

They were helpful.

Did you find the international office staff helpful?

International office staff was helpful. However, visa office staff hates the foreign students. They did not help at all.

Please describe the resources available to exchange students (ie computers, the library)?

I was registered to European Studies program. I used their computers.

Did you experience any language or cultural difficulties at St.Petersburg State University?

At St.Petersburg State University administrative duties are assumed by academic staff. So, it is difficult to find academic staff to deal the administrative duties. It is better to call them and make an appointment.

Do you think that going on exchange contributed to your academic development? If so, how?

It contributed. I improved my Russian. I enlarged my point of view about my thesis topic.

## Practical

### **Accommodation**

Please describe the accommodation options available to exchange students. What were their pros and cons?

You may stay in dormitories of university or you may rent an apartment, room. Rents for apartments are higher than the dormitory fees. However, in the dormitory you have to share your room, kitchen and bathroom with others.

How expensive were the accommodation options?

I paid 3000 rubles/month for triple room in the dormitory.

What type of accommodation would you recommend?

It is a personal choice.

### **Food**

Was food expensive?

It is expensive.

Where is the best place to shop?

Big markets are cheaper.

How much does it cost to eat out at a local restaurant/cafе?

300-500 rubles.

### **Transport**

How did you find the local transport network?

It is easy to go everywhere by the local transport network.

Was it expensive to use local transport?

If you manage to get student card for transportation it is not expensive.

Did you have the Students Travel Card (discounts for public transport)?

No. They could not find my name on the system so they did not give me that card.

## **Personal Safety**

Did you find St.Petersburg safe?

I think it is safe.

Did you use medical services at St.Petersburg? If yes please describe their pros and cons.

I didn't use.

Do you have any safety advice for other exchange students?

They should be careful about their wallets and passports.

## Social

### ***Life on Exchange***

How would you describe the way of life in Russia and in St.Petersburg in particular?

Life is so active and amusing in St.Petersburg. There are lots of activities to do.

Did you experience 'culture shock'?

Most of the people don't know English. Sometimes it was difficult to communicate.

Do you have any suggestions on how to cope with 'culture shock'?

Russian people are talking as if they are angry when you ask something. However, I understood that it is the way they speak.

What is the best way to meet people?

I think attending courses and staying in the dormitory is the best way to meet people.

Do you have any suggestions on what to do on the weekend?

There are lots of things to do.

### ***Travel***

Did you travel before, after or during your exchange?

I went to Moscow.

What would you advise to travellers?

It is better to buy tickets earlier in order to find cheap tickets.

## **Highlights**

Briefly describe the highlights of your exchange experience

## **Problems**

Briefly describe any problems you experienced on exchange and any suggestions you may have to help others avoid them.

In summer times there is no hot water for 15 days.

## **Other Comments**

Do you have any further comments?

Thank you for taking the time to share your exchange experiences in this report.

Please save your report as a **Word document** and email a copy to [nechaeva@ir.pu.ru](mailto:nechaeva@ir.pu.ru)

Date: 05.08.2009

Name: Damla Diker