

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**.

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.

Name:	ZYMANTE JOKUBAUSKAITE
Host faculty at SPSU	FACULTY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
Exchange Study Period	01.09.09 – 30.01.10
Home Institution	UNIVERSITY OF BOLOGNA

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

If yes, please give your preferred email address: ZYMANTEI@GMAIL.COM

The Host University

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

THE QUALITY OF STUDIES AND GOOD REFERENCES OF PROFESSORS OF MY HOME UNIVERSITY.

How would you describe St.Petersburg State University?

OLD, COSY, GOOD UNIVERSITY.

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

THE MAIN BUILDING OF UNIVERSITY IS SITUATED IN THE CITY CENTER, EASILY REACHABLE FROM DORMITORY OF VASILEVSKY ISLAND. CONCERNING THE FACULTY IT IS IN A NICE PLACE, SURROUNDED BY MAIN CITY ADMINISTRATION BUILDINGS, BUT TOO FAR AWAY FROM DORMITORY, BECAUSE IT TOOK 1,5 HOURS TO GO TO FACULTY BY USING EVERY SINGLE TYPE OF TRANSPORT - BUS, METRO, TROLLEYBUS.

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

1) RUSSIAN LANGUAGE.

2) RUSSIAN - EUROPEAN UNION RELATIONS

THE COURSES IN THE FACULTY WERE REALLY INTERESTED. HOWEVER, PROFESSOR OF RUSSIAN - EU RELATIONS SEEMED TO BE THE EXPERT OF THE AREA, BUT IN MY SUBJECTIVE OPINION, SHE LACKED EXPERIENCE OF LECTURING. THE COURSE WAS TOO "DRY" IN THE SENSE, THAT ONLY THE FACTS WERE PRESENTED, WITHOUT MORE ANALYSIS OF REASONS AND UNDERSTANDING OF RUSSIAN PEOPLE.

3) RUSSIA AND GLOBALIZATION

THIS WAS THE BEST COURSE, WHICH I REALLY APPRECIATE. THE COURSE WAS WELL ORGANIZED AND PROFESSOR WAS REALLY GREAT, WITH AN INTERESTING WAY OF LECTURING AND A PERFECT KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE. CONCERNING, ENGLISH OF OTHER PROFESSORS, SOMETIMES IT WAS DIFFICULT TO LISTEN AND TO FOLLOW THEM.

4) METHODS AND PRINCIPLES OF CONTEMPORARY DIPLOMACY

THE COURSE WAS REALLY INTERESTING. THE PROFESSOR WAS FRIENDLY AND KIND IN A SENSE THAT SHE WAS THE ONLY PROFESSOR OF MY TAKEN COURSES, WHO ASKED US TO INTRODUCE OURSELVES IN THE FIRST CLASS AND SHE WAS REALLY INTERESTED IN OUR ACADEMIC LIFE. THE COURSE WAS LIVELY, WELL ORGANIZED AND I ENJOYABLE.

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

YES, I DID.

RUSSIAN LANGUAGE COURSE WAS ONLY IN RUSSIAN. THE PROFESSORS DID NOT USE ENGLISH AT ALL, THUS WITHIN THIS METHOD STUDENTS ARE OBLIGED TO LEARN RUSSIAN IN THE EFFICIENT WAY. HOWEVER, THE LEVEL OF KNOWING RUSSIAN LANGUAGE OF THE STUDENTS VARIED AND SOMETIMES THIS CAUSED DIFFICULTIES ON LECTURES TO BE COMPLETELY EFFICIENT.

Did you find the academic staff helpful?

YES, I DID.

Did you find the international office staff helpful?

INTERNATIONAL OFFICE WAS REALLY HELPFUL. WITHOUT IT, MY STAY IN ST. PETERSBURG WOULD HAVE BEEN REALLY DIFFICULT.

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

WELL, OUR COMPUTER CLASS IN THE FACULTY WERE UNDER CONSTRUCTION, THUS IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO USE COMPUTERS. THERE WERE NO COPY MACHINES IN THE FACULTY. I DID NOT USE LIBRARY, BECAUSE ALL THE MATERIALS FOR THE COURSES WERE PROVIDED BY PROFESSORS OR EASILY FOUND IN THE NET.

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

NOT LANGUAGE, BUT SOMETIME CULTURAL DIFFICULTIES.

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

YES, IT CONTRIBUTED TO MY ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT. I IMPROVED MY RUSSIAN LANGUAGE AND GOT TO KNOW RUSSIAN ACADEMIC VIEW OF THE PROCESSES WHICH ARE GOING ON IN THE WORLD, IN POLITICAL, CULTURAL AND SOCIAL AREA.

Practical

Accommodation

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

DORMITORY OR RENTING AN APARTMENT. I CHOSE DORMITORY BECAUSE IT WAS CHEAPER. BUT I REALLY FOUND SOME DIFFICULTIES. ADMINISTRATION OF THE DORMITORY IS BADLY ORGANISED. FIRST OF ALL, THE CASH OF THE DORMITORY IS SITUATED IN OTHER BUILDING. SECONDLY, ALL THE STUDENTS LIVING IN THE DORMITORIES WERE SUPPOSED TO PAY FIRST FEE AT THE SAME DAY. THUS, IT TOOK ME 5 HOURS STANDING IN THE QUEUE TO PAY MONEY. THIRDLY, THERE WERE ONLY 2 WOMEN WORKING IN THE OFFICE AND ONE WOMAN WORKING IN THE CASH REGISTER, WHICH WAS OFTEN CLOSED. EVEN MORE, ADMINISTRATION MIXED THE SUM OF THE MONEY STUDENTS WERE SUPPOSED TO PAY FOR LIVING IN THE DORMITORY, SO STUDENTS OVERPAID AND THEN HAD TO WAIT 2 MONTHS TO GET THEIR MONEY BACK. THUS, DEALING WITH ADMINISTRATION OF THE DORMITORY WAS REALLY STRESSFUL AND REQUIRED MUCH PATIENCE.

How expensive were the accommodation options?

DORMITORY 3300 RUBLES/MONTH.

What type of accommodation would you recommend?

IF A STUDENT CAN AFFORD RENTING AN APARTMENT, I WOULD RECOMMENED TO DO THAT.

Food

Was food expensive?

NO, IT WAS NOT.

Where is the best place to shop?

THERE ARE A LOT OF GROCERY SHOPS, THAT ARE OPEN 24 HOURS.

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

200-300 RUBLES FOR LUNCH IN FAST FOOD OR CAFÉTERIA.

Transport

How did you find the local transport network?

BAD, EXCEPT METRO. THE BUSES WERE ALWAYS FULL AND DIRTY. DRIVERS WERE RUNNING AS CRAZY AND I FELT REALLY SORRY FOR CONDUCTORS.

Was it expensive to use local transport?

NO, IT WAS NOT

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

YES, I DID.

Personal Safety

Did you find St.Petersburg safe?

NOT REALLY. MY FOREIGN CLASSMATES WERE BEATEN IN THE STREET FOR THE RASICM BY LOCAL RUSSIANS. I EXPERIENCED THAT RUSSIAN PEOPLE DO NOT LIKE HEARING ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THE STREETS OR IN A LOCAL TRANSPORT AND THEY MAKE UNSUITABLE COMMENTS ON THAT.

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

NO, I DID NOT.

Do you have any safety advice for other exchange students?

BE AWARE WHEREVER YOU GO AND BETTER SPEAK RUSSIAN THAN ANY OTHER FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN RUSSIA.

Social

Life on Exchange

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

ST. PETERSBURG IS A CULTURAL CITY AND THERE ARE SO MUCH WHAT TO SEE AND WHAT TO DO. THE CITY IS LIVELY AND YOU WILL NEVER GET BORED.

Did you experience 'culture shock'?

YES, ESPECIALLY FOR ALCOHOLISM.

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

DIFFICULT TO SUGGEST.

What is the best way to meet people?

IN CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT.

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

SIGHTSEEING.

Travel

Did you travel before, after or during your exchange?

I HAVE BEEN IN MOSCOW AND AROUND ST. PETERSBURG DURING MY EXCHANGE PERIOD.

What would you advise to travellers?

TRAVEL IN AUTUMN, WHEN IT IS STILL WARM.

Highlights

Briefly describe the highlights of your exchange experience

I MET NICE EXCHANGE STUDENTS FROM ALL OTHER THE WORLD, WHICH BECAME MY FRIENDS. I IMPROVED MY RUSSIAN LANGUAE AND THIS MAKES ME HAPPY.

Problems

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

DORMITORY PROBLEMS MENTIONED BEFORE.

Other Comments

Do you have any further comments?

JUST WANT TO THANK PEOPLE WHO WORKED TO MAKE MY EXCHANGE PERIOD NICE AND PROFESSORS WHO SHARED KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCES.

The information given in this Report CAN BE PUBLISHED on the Internet YES

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

Date: 17.01.10

Name: ZYMANTE
JOKUBAUSKAITE

The idea and the model of this form is taken from the University of South Australia web pages.