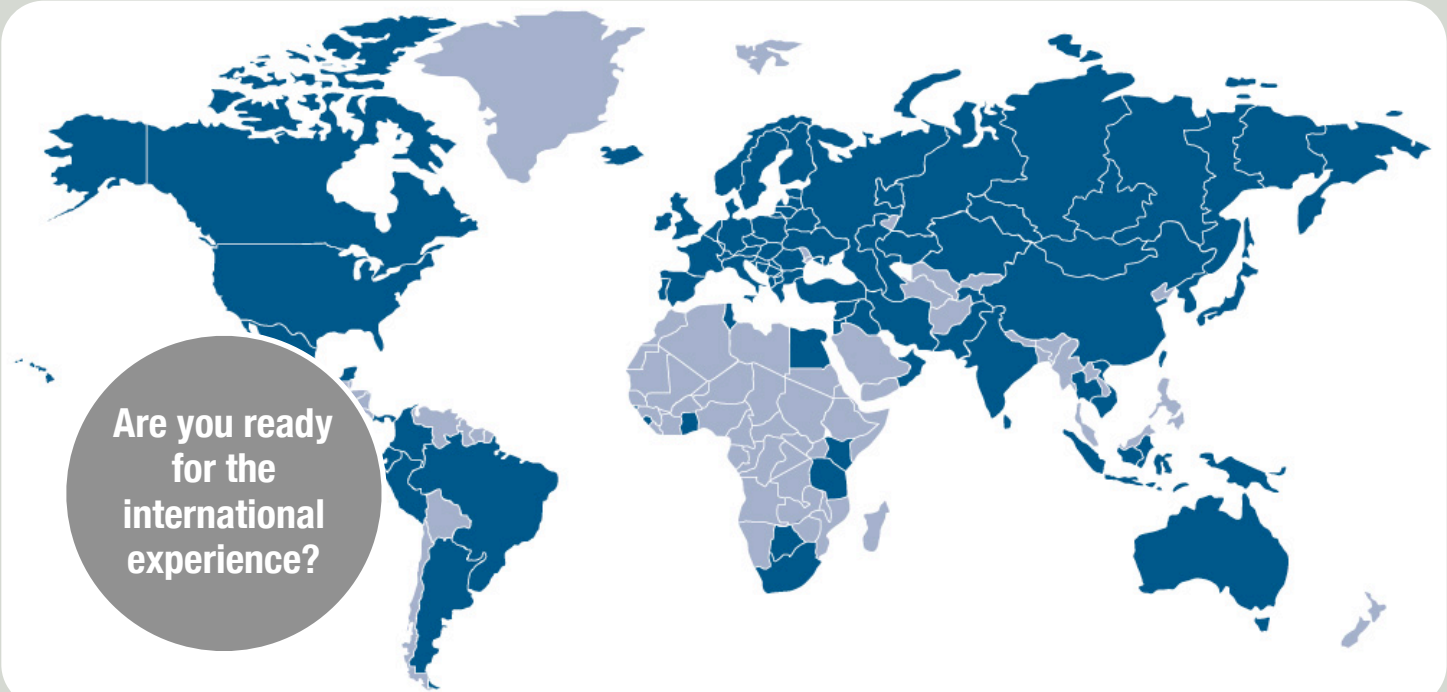


Edition 2014

IAESTE

Internship Booklet



Are you ready
for the
international
experience?

IAESTE IS ALL ABOUT INTERNATIONAL INTERNSHIPS.

IAESTE provides a fun way to discover the world, by working abroad. In this internship booklet you can read stories written by students, just like you, who went abroad last summer with IAESTE. The goal of this booklet is to give you some impressions, to remove all doubts and to give you the chance to get this great experience for yourself!

IAESTE is active in Brussels, Leuven and Ghent. The co-operating institutes are VUB, ULB, KUL and UGent. If you are in your 3rd Bachelor or master years in bio-engineering or engineering at one of these institutes you are able to participate in IAESTE.

Enjoy reading and we hope to see you on the next IAESTE activity; sometime, someplace, somewhere in the world.

Pieter Christiaens,

LC Ghent President 2014-2015



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CROATIA

ARNO BERINAERT

I spent eight weeks in Croatia and didn't regret a single one of them. It wasn't at the well-known coastline but in a city in the East, called Osijek. Osijek is the fourth biggest city of Croatia, however it's only half the size of Ghent and relatively unknown.

The first Sunday of July I set forth to Osijek, only to return the last Sunday of August. When I arrived, my local contact person was waiting to get me around in the city and do administrative stuff. She guided me to the dorm: a modern student apartment that houses Croatian students during school, but makes space for international students in summer. Several organizations of international exchange (e.g. Erasmus, AIESEC,...) are housed in the building. I shared a room with a Scottish guy, also from IAESTE. I couldn't wish for a better roommate.

After installing my stuff, my roommate took me to meet the other trainees at the volleyball court (Osijek is equipped with marvelous sport facilities). There were about ten trainees in Osijek. The advantage of this number of fellow trainees is that you become a close group and you get to know every single one of them. After volleyball it was time for what would become the daily portion of beer.

Next day I met my colleagues and the company. The company was called Rencon. The arrival was pleasant and relaxed. I had a chat and a drink with my mentor and the boss. They explained me that Rencon was a road designing company which played a major role in most of the projects in the



Osijek,
Croatia

surrounding regions Baranja and Slavonia. I would gain knowledge of the software they use: AutoCAD Civil 3D, which is –being a civil engineer- very useful. They would provide me with a teacher and as final project I had to design a complete road, starting from a digital terrain model. In between I could join my colleagues if they were going to visit a site, either an empty site where they have to design a road, or a site where a road is being constructed which they have to control.

Doing this job I spent hours on the road with my mentor, who was glad to talk to me about the history of the region (one of the most affected by the Yugoslavian war), the local specialties, the company,... He did IAESTE traineeships himself and my boss was a major initial supporter of the local IAESTE committee, so they insisted on

giving me a great experience. We went to local restaurants, local touristic sites and we had more than one of the local drink, Rakija. Also my other colleagues took me to the pub and invited my for dinner at their place. Taking an extra day to visit some foreign cities was never an issue.

Work stopped at 3pm. so I had the whole afternoon to enjoy free time. We hung out with the trainees and local IAESTE-members. The local committee is eager to organize stuff. We went to Copacabana (local open air swimming pool), swam in the Drava (local river), played volleyball, or had some other activity. Not a single afternoon was unspent. Afterwards we had dinner. Somebody cooked, but mostly we went to the local bakery for Burek or to the restaurant. Prices are really fair in Osijek. It also happened once a week that I didn't

return from work soon, because I went out with one of the colleagues for eating.

In the evening we gathered in front of the dorm to spend the evening drinking and talking. On Thursdays and Saturdays we head for the local party place TFNA. Or we organized a theme party our self.

The weekends were reserved for trips. Osijek is perfectly located. We went to Sarajevo in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Budapest in Hungary (GETT Together) and Belgrade in Serbia. We went for Papuk national park in Croatia and to the BMX-event Pannonian Challenge (for only 3 euros you see the world

master BMX at work). One weekend the local IAESTE board organized a GETT Together: IAESTE members of other cities are invited to spend the weekend in Osijek.

With all these activities, eight weeks passed by really fast. It was far more than a working experience. I met great people from all around and got to know Osijek and its inhabitants in a profound way.



CROATIA



HONG KONG

ANDREAS D'HOORE

My internship at polyU has definitely been a great experience and eye-opening chapter of my life. First I will speak about the actual work I performed at polyU and then about Hong Kong and the people.

I was assigned to participate in a project about knock-out genes of *E. coli*. The project searched for the effect of different knock-out genes on the growth capacity of *E. coli* that were submitted to different concentrations of 2 types of drugs: CIP and CTX. For this we had a certain schedule of weekly and daily tasks. Normally on Friday and Monday we read the results from the prepared plates and put these into excel files for the employer to use. Then on the rest of the days in the morning we prepared the agar (growth medium) after which we inoculate the prepared plates from the day before with the knock-out gene *E. coli* strains. In the afternoon we use the agar we prepared in the morning to fill more plates that go into the refrigerator and will be used the day after for inoculation. Above is a picture of the group of polyU students and our employer (prof. Sheng Chen).

The people and the city are hard to describe in such a small text. I can only say that I have experienced beautiful moments here and met some pretty great people. It's a great experience to go beyond your comfort zone and just talk to people from different countries. The differences between all the different cultures is probably one of



Hong Kong,
China

the things that I will remember for the longest time. I will not try to explain specific things I have seen or done here in Hong Kong, I will only say that I really advise people to try an international internship just like this one because it's a really good experience. The exact reasons why it's good for your personality are hard to explain but after having done an internship they you understand what I mean with this phrase.

The one thing I'm going to say is that it's even good for people who are not that social at all and just want to have a good time. Lots of things were organized by the students themselves and by the IAESTE organization from Hong Kong. I really enjoyed those events. We had a welcoming lunch which

was a little more organized and formal (with photographer etc) than they had us believe, but it was still good fun. Also IAESTE Hong Kong organized a boat trip day which was definitely one of the best days of the whole internship. They hired a yacht with 2 speedboats and a banana to ride and even wakeboards! This was a really nice day, and they made sure everybody could join because it was organized on a Monday so everybody normally had to work. They made sure we got the day off though. From the students we organized some trips as well. I didn't go on all of them but if you want you can definitely do that, it's totally up to you. We organized some evening trips after work in the first few weeks to go see the typical tourist attractions and just get to know

each other. Also some weekends some of the trainees organized for example a camping trip where we camped on the beach and a did 4 day trip to mainland China. This trip to mainland China was by far the best part of my internship and I have very good memories about those days.

Even though I'm not a big group-person, I still could enjoy the company of the other trainees if I wanted to. If I had a night when I didn't feel like it I just went for a little walk down the harbor and for some dinner by myself or with just one person. Just to say you can pretty much make an internship like this into whatever suits your personality. There were people who constantly spent time with the group but this wasn't really my cup of tea. I did however enjoy the lunches

and the time spent in the lab with the local students a lot. I worked with 5 PolyU students and just talking to them and joking around a little in the lab also gave me great memories. I will definitely miss just working and talking about the differences in our cultures with them. They also tried teaching me Cantonese (Hong Kong language) but that was pretty much a mission impossible.

All in all, I had a great time and if it wasn't for missing my girlfriend and family for such a long time, I would do this every summer...

Thanks for letting me do this internship, it was truly amazing!

HONG KONG



UK

BJORN DEVOGELAERE

My placement was at the University of Ulster, Coleraine campus. My accommodation was also on the campus, which was very practical. I shared a house with five other students, four from Brazil and one from France.

During my first week I got to know my working environment and other people on the campus. I would work on a project which was a collaboration between the university and a company in Dublin. I worked on the project for one month, most of the time on my own, now and then with some feedback from the supervisors.

I discovered that I would be the only IAESTE student in Coleraine, so most of the weekends I would take the train to Belfast to meet up with the other trainees. My first weekend I went on a Dublin trip organized by the Local Committee. It was my first IAESTE activity so I got to know a lot of new people, which was definitely fun! There were students from everywhere: Spain, Norway, France, Sweden, Austria, Macedonia, The Netherlands, Ecuador... In short, we would have a lot of stories to tell each other. In Dublin we met up with the Local Committee there, and some other Ireland trainees. We visited the Guinness Storehouse and even tried out some Irish dances. We also went out in some Dublin clubs. On Sunday we did a city tour, and then we were off to Belfast again.

The following weekend there was a 'Belfast weekend', with an international evening on Saturday, on which everyone could present some local food of his or her



Coleraine,
UK

country. I also learned a lot about the history of Northern Ireland and 'The Troubles'.

Another activity I really enjoyed was the 'Summer Reception': free food and interesting conversations with employers, what else could you wish for? The same day I had a meeting in Dublin for work at the company I did the project for. This was a very interesting experience, as I got to explain what I'd done so far in English. As I clarified on that meeting, it was not very useful to continue on the project before the company had investigated the other options further. I would work on a new project in August.

Meanwhile, I did some activities with the people in Coleraine also: there was a karaoke event each Tuesday in a bar at a town nearby, which was definitely 'craic' (= an

word Irish people use for different things, but that can be translated as 'fun'). One of those karaoke nights, I even met some people of the 'Game of Thrones' staff! (which was not that special as almost half of Northern Ireland seems to be working for Game of Thrones) I also visited the Bushmills distillery and the famous rocks of Giant's Causeway.

The activities continued in August, although some trainees were starting to leave and others were starting to arrive. I discovered other parts of the North Coast, like Dunluce castle and the Carrick-A-Rede rope bridge.

Most of the weekends I would spend my time in Belfast, as that was the place to be for activities (luckily I didn't have to book a hostel each time thanks to my

friends there). The last 'great trip' was the Fermanagh (in the southwestern part of Northern Ireland) weekend. We visited Enniskillen castle and the Marble Arch caves, and after a delicious BBQ, we threw a big party, as most of the trainees would leave the week after...

I spent one more weekend in Belfast (discovering some great shops you can't find in Belgium). The last day in Coleraine I took the train to Castlerock, and admired the beautiful views.

The day I returned home I had one last meeting in Dublin and after that I took the plane home.

To conclude, the placement was a great experience: I met a lot of new people from everywhere in the world, enjoyed lots of activities and had the chance to practice my English communication skills. However, I think my work would've been far more interesting if I would've worked at the company in Dublin or if I would've

worked on another project together with other people. I can't really say I learned that much from other people at work which is a pity. At first I also didn't like the idea of being the only IAESTE student in Coleraine, but in the end I could count on the hospitality of my friends in Belfast, and I enjoyed my freedom of choice!

UK



NORWAY

ELLEN DHEERE

If I want to do it, I have to do it know.

It was my last year at university and so my last chance to go abroad as a student. As I was very curious how it would be to live and work in another country for a few months, I decided to apply for an internship through IAESTE. It would be the perfect opportunity to meet new people, to learn how to deal with unexpected problems in a strange country, to improve my English, to discover a new culture and to have a first work experience. I really wanted to go.

I couldn't be more excited when I heard the news: I was allowed as a trainee in Bergen (Norway). Four months later I was standing at the airport, hugging my family for the last time in two months. One moment I didn't want to go anymore, but I still was too curious to stay at home. So I left.

I arrived in Bergen and was surprised it didn't rain (you need to know Bergen is known for its heavy rainfalls). I took the bus to the city centre and had to wait for Karoline, the IAESTE responsible in Bergen. She showed me my apartment, guided me across the centre and took care of the tax paperwork. After exploring the city centre I went back to my apartment to unpack my bags and pack them again because the next day I had to work already! But first I went to a pub with Karoline to meet the other trainees. I immediately felt at home!

The day after was my first day at work! In contrast to most of the other trainees, I didn't have to work at the university but I went on field



Bergen,
Norway

trips with 1 to 4 other researchers. I was very happy the weather was good, because I knew I was going to be outside the whole week, no matter what the weather would be like. I worked on a project about climate change. On each field trip we went from Bergen to the east and back to gather data about the plants. I really loved those field trips! We always went to the most beautiful, often desolate, places and had an amazing view over the fjords. More than once I realized how lucky I was to be outside in this beautiful country, surrounded by cows, sheep, horses or ants. Nevertheless, that were hard days. We often had to hike to our sites for one hour with all the equipment, we were outside whole day and often had to work long hours, sometimes till 22 O'clock. Then we had to drive to our sleeping huts and try to cook something which is very interesting without cooking equipment.

After 4 to 10 days we went back to Bergen. Because I sometimes had

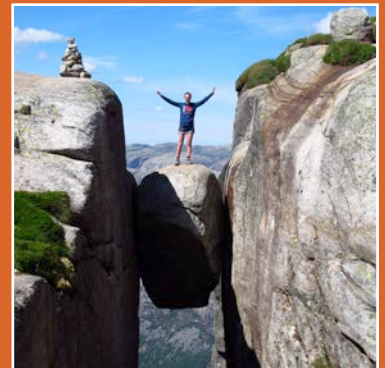
to work during the weekend and I had to work long days, I always could take some days off afterwards. Time to discover Bergen and walk up to the Stoltzekleiven, visit mount floyen, play volleyball with my new friends and have a BBQ in the park. Then there also was time to do some bigger trips. With three other friends I went to Stavanger for a hiking weekend. On the first day we went to the preikestolen. On the top of this gigantic rock you have an amazing view over the fjords. On the second day we hiked to an even more spectacular place: the Kjeragbolten. It was a really hard hike of 6 hours, but it was really worth it! We even did dare to stand on this famous rock hanging between the other rocks high above the fjords.

We also got the chance to meet trainees who stayed in the other cities of Norway during one of the IAESTE weekends. This is how I went to Oslo and met some great people. We discovered the city together, went to a restaurant and

went out at night. Even though everything in Norway (and especially the alcohol) is very expensive, Norwegians know how to party! Going on an internship with IAESTE really was one of the best decisions in my life. I enjoyed my work a lot, it was great to meet all these new people and I really fell in love with this beautiful country. I cannot wait to go back.



NORWAY



ECUADOR

EMKE DE PRIESTER

I am Emke De Priester and graduated as Bio-engineer at the KULeuven. During my education I never had the chance to do an internship in a company. The lack of an internship is disadvantageous for finding a good job. So I was thinking about doing an internship on my own initiative. Besides studying I also like traveling and learning about other cultures. So I thought, why do I not combine those two things? And that idea was the best idea I ever had! I was looking on internet and I found really quick the site of IAESTE. In November I sent my candidacy to the IAESTE organization and in February I knew that I was selected for a stage in Ecuador. I was so happy, but honestly I did not know the country. So the first thing I did, was searching on google. I learned a bit about their culture and of course, I tried to learn a little bit Spanish. That was also a good decision, because most of the people in Ecuador cannot speak a word English.

IAESTE was helping me very much, in Belgium as well as in Ecuador. Every question I had, they were happy to answer me. The communication was perfect, which made my stay easier. I did not know in advance, who my family was where I would stay for 2 months. But a few weeks before I went to Ecuador, my family wrote me an mail. They said that they would pick me up at the airport and that they would take care of me. So it happened like that. I lived in their house and did a lot of things with them. Because of the fact that I did



Santa Domingo, Ecuador

not stay in Quito (the capital of Ecuador) but in Santa Domingo (3 hours away from Quito), it was not possible for me to join every trip that was organized by IAESTE. But that was not a big problem, because in the weekends that I stayed in Santa Domingo, my family took me to nice places. So I went with them to Cotapaxi, to natives communities, to waterfalls ...

On other weekends I went on Fridays to Quito and did trips with IAESTE people. So we went to see Papallacta (thermal baths), we took a train that is called 'Devil's nose', climbing on the Vulcan Chimborazo, Otavalo, ...

So you see that besides working, you have enough time to see the country and to do nice things. At work it was not always so easy, because of the language. The

people are not talking one word English. So it was sometimes not easy to understand each other. After a while it goes better and the people here in Ecuador are very friendly. I never met such a friendly people, they want you to help with everything. I was also lucky that my family where I lived and my boss, where the same people. This was easier for me to arrange my work. Especially when I was sick. The second week I must have eat something wrong, so I was sick for a week. This food poisoning is the only bad thing that happened to me, during my entire stay.

I just can say that this internship was one of the best decisions I ever made in my entire live. So if you are hesitating a little bit, just do it! In the beginning I was also a little bit afraid to go alone to such a far

country. But I do not regret it. I would have regret it more, when i did not go!

The first picture is at a mountain which give you a view over whole Quito. You get there with the teleferico and you can enjoy the view!

The second picture is taken in Otavalo, at the Cuicocha lake. This was also an amazing view! After we visited the market in Otavalo, we went to this beautiful lake.

The last picture is at 5010m on the Chimborazo Vulcan. The IAESTE people had organized a trip to this Vulcan. We climbed till above 5000m and it was amazing. A view and experience to never forget.

So I just want to say that after this internship, I carry Ecuador in my heart! I learned about the culture, how they work in another country and discovered so much more in a few months.



ECUADOR



MACEDONIA

INE DIRKS

I spent my summer in the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia. To be honest it wasn't the first country I had in mind, in fact I hadn't heard of it before. But after filling out all the necessary forms and checking all the requirements to be able to get ECTS credits for it, Macedonia was the only country that was left. I was sure I wanted to do an internship abroad, so I decided to go. On the 29th of July 2014 my 9 week adventure started at Brussels Airport. I arrived one hour after midnight at the Alexander the Great Airport in Skopje. There, 2 IAESTE members came to pick me up and brought me to the dormitory Pellagonia. Macedonian dormitories are very basic, especially compared to Belgian standards. I shared a room with 3 other trainees and in the room there was one desk, one plug, no curtains, no internet and nothing was really clean. In the bathroom of the boys the shower was broken, so we had to share 1 shower with 8 people which can become quite difficult when everyone has to get up around the same time. But we were told this was the best dormitory in Skopje and later this indeed proved to be true.

I had one free day before I started working, so I decided to explore the city by myself. Pretty soon it became clear that the dormitory wasn't so close to the centre. I walked around a lot and



Skopje,
Macedonia

the map I had with English street names wasn't very useful since everything in Macedonian is written in the Cyrillic alphabet. Asking for directions was also more difficult than expected because most Macedonians don't speak English and I didn't understand one word of their language. Eventually I found my way and by the time the other trainees came back from work I also returned to the dorm. Every Monday there was an IAESTE-meeting where they expected all the trainees to be present, so by the evening we went to the office. There every new trainee had to introduce himself. The rest of the discussion was a mystery because they switched to Macedonian after the introductions. After that everyone went to a bar, which became almost a daily tradition.

On the first day of work an IAESTE member always takes the trainee to his/her workplace. After about 20 minutes on the bus, we arrived at the 'Gradezen Institute Makedonija' or the 'Engineering Institute of Macedonia'. After meeting one of the employees for like 10 minutes my working day was over. I had to come back the next day, because there was already a Macedonian trainee that started that day. After work, one of the IAESTE members helped to open a Macedonian bank account and to purchase a sim card, so it wouldn't cost a fortune to contact other members or trainees. The next day I got an elaborate tour at work and had a conversation with the man responsible for me. He told me that actually they never asked for a trainee for architecture or civil

engineering, but for geotechnical engineering and lab work. Since I'm studying architectural engineering, they didn't really have work for me. I got one assignment, which took me 3 days and after that they didn't give me any new tasks. I asked for some work and got a big project on which I could spend about 2 weeks. The rest of my 9 weeks at the company I didn't get anything to do. One of the colleagues was trying to rent her apartment and as soon as she heard I stayed at Pellagonia she offered to go and take a look at the apartment. During 'working' hours we went to visit the place. I loved it immediately, it was heaven compared to the dormitory. Since there were two bedrooms I could share the place with another trainee that was staying for 9 weeks and we could split the rent. Life in Macedonia is very cheap, so also the rent was very affordable. It was just a little more expensive than the dorm, but in a much better condition.

Every weekend something was organized by IAESTE and almost

every day they went to a bar. Some weekends we also did things with just some of the trainees. For example we took a trip to Sofia, Bulgaria and from there travelled to Istanbul, Turkey. This was an adventure to remember forever. At the end of my internship there were a lot of problems with my payment and there was no help at all from IAESTE. This was quite a disappointment because I thought the organization was there to help with these kind of situations. Eventually I got part of the money I earned and part was transferred when I was already back in Belgium, which makes it very difficult to receive the money. Although the organization wasn't as good as expected, I don't regret going to Macedonia. The experience was amazing and I met some people that became great friends. I learned a lot, not about my studies or the work, but about life in general.

MACEDONIA



JAPAN

LENNART LANGOUCHE

My internship took place from July to September in Tokyo, Japan. I chose Japan because I had never been in Asia before and I was hoping to discover an interesting and different culture.

I got welcomed by three Japanese IAESTE members at one of the crazy railway stations of Tokyo, namely Ueno. I got a first glimpse of the exciting city of Tokyo and was guided to what would be my room for the next eight weeks. A normal room, not too big not too small, but with an excellent location in the center of Tokyo and close to The University of Tokyo, which would be my new work environment. On top of that, there were three other IAESTE trainees who were already living in the same building as mine.

The first few days I tried to conquer my jetlag, discover some of the famous spots in Tokyo and make some new friends. It was during the first weekend though that I really met a lot of people who would become my friends during the rest of my stay and most likely even after that. On Saturday there was an IAESTE event where we visited the Japanese space agency JAXA and the most famous beer brewery of Japan, namely Asahi. Around 20 local members accompanied the 10 trainees that were there at the moment and we had an absolutely great day, which ended with us bonding over food and drinks in a typical Japanese izakaya restaurant.

At my workplace, The University of Tokyo, things started slowly but got on their way after the first week. I got welcomed by my supervisors



and colleagues and they even held a welcome barbecue for me one evening after work. I had to get acquainted with the research subjects of my group and learn some new techniques in and around the lab. The working atmosphere was always good and never too stressful. My supervisor supported me and let me work at my own pace. I learned to work with some new software for designing electronic circuits and got reminded of how to solder, something I hadn't done since my 2nd Bachelor year.

The next weeks only got better. I started to find my way in Tokyo and got accustomed to using the impossible to decipher public transportation system. I got to know some of the Japanese customs and tried a lot of the local food. More IAESTE activities followed, with two of my personal highlights climbing Mount Fuji and

going camping in Kawai, a lovely place in nature two hours away from Tokyo. On every activity there were always a ton of people from the local committee, which was great to meet and befriend some Japanese students. They also taught us some words in Japanese, took us out for typical food and helped us with booking tickets for a show or any other problem we encountered.

As the weeks went on some people went back to their home countries and some new trainees arrived, but the great atmosphere never disappeared. I was allowed to take a few days of work and used these days to visit some other cities in Japan. I went to Kyoto and very briefly visited Osaka and Nara. This was a great experience and I especially enjoyed the contrast between Tokyo and Kyoto (despite their similar names). I got a better view on Japan as a whole and

learned more about their culture and history.

As a conclusion I would definitely say that this was one of the best and most interesting experiences of my life. I will miss the crazy city, the polite Japanese manners and of course the sushi. Most of all though, I will miss the awesome people I've met here during this internship, but I hope to stay in touch with them in the future. The only thing I regret is not staying for a longer time in Japan, but who knows, maybe I'll be back in the future.

JAPAN



BRAZIL

LAURENS TEMBUYSER

This summer, I went on the biggest adventure of my life by travelling to Brazil for nine weeks to do an internship at Centro Tecnológico de Desenvolvimento Regional de Viçosa. This is a spin-off company of Universidade Federal de Viçosa. Viçosa is a small city in the state Minas Gerais which is 350 km to the north of Rio de Janeiro. I worked there as an International Relations Assistant and I stayed with six Brazilians in an authentic fraternity house.

Every person who has gone abroad for a couple of months will tell you the same things: that you party like you have never partied before, that you go on trips every chance you get, that you meet the most amazing people, etc. But it is simply the truth: I have had the time of my life during those nine weeks. I travelled around whenever I felt like it, constantly surrounded by dozens of excited Brazilians. This way, I spent one week in Rio de Janeiro and two unforgettable weekends in Belo Horizonte and I visited Mariana and Ouro Preto (which is the only Brazilian city that is on the UNESCO list, but which is also the ideal place to party or to celebrate Carnival according to countless Brazilians). Here I have listed some Brazilian life lessons that you will adopt when you spend a summer in Brazil:

- You learn the importance of patience. Do not try to rush Brazilians, because it has the opposite effect. This is the case when you wait in line at the bank, in the supermarket, to get into a club, etc. The best thing you



Viçosa,
Brazil

can do is to just wait patiently and have a chat with the others standing in line.

- It is a cliché that the most beautiful people in the world come from Brazil, but like every cliché, there is some truth to it! Brazilians shower up to two times a day and brush their teeth about four times a day, even on a lazy Sunday when they are not leaving their house.
- Every reason is good enough to have a party. Sitting alone at home is very un-Brazilian. Bars and clubs are always full of people, even on Sundays or Mondays and during their exam periods!
- They do not worry as much as Belgians do. As has been said before: they simply enjoy life and can enjoy spending their time doing nothing.
- Brazilians are the nicest people to be around. If you meet them in the street, they will not give you a hand but will immediately reach for a hug or a kiss. Even the coffee lady at the company I worked, greeted me with a hug every morning. Can you imagine something like that happening in our own grumpy country?
- You learn to appreciate the small things in life because once you leave the shabby fraternity house, you see

people cleaning the pavements and the streets with a broken old broom and you pass the notorious favelas on your way to work.

Some survival guidelines:

- Clothing is really laid-back in Brazil so leave your Swiss watch, Ray Ban sunglasses and Ralph Lauren shirts at home. This will prevent you from getting robbed.
- If it looks like a favela, it probably is, so get the hell out of there! Most people living in favelas are harmless, but you could be risking your life by entering some of these neighbourhoods in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo.
- Brush up on your Portuguese.
- European and American clothing brands are very expensive in Brazil due to the taxes. So if

you spot something that is not 50% more expensive as in Belgium then it is most likely fake.

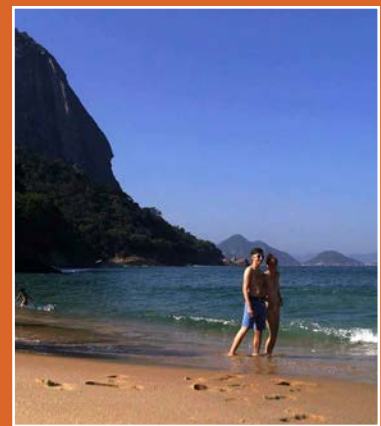
- As I mentioned before: do not rush them. It does not help... at all.

Of course, doing an internship outside of Europe has some downsides too. The bureaucracy, for example. I had to visit the Consulate of Brazil in Brussels four times during my exams in June to apply for a student visa. At one point, they even threw my passport in my face, literally. Once arrived in Brazil, I had to go countless times to the Federal Police to register for a temporary identity card and to several offices in the admissions building of Universidade Federal de Viçosa.

However, my advice to you is: do not get scared by administrative nightmares. Do not hesitate to apply for an IAESTE internship. Do not stay in your comfort zone, but get out and have the most amazing experience of your student life. I am already looking for my next internship abroad!

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BRAZIL.



PORTUGAL

HUU QUANG NGUYEN

ONE ADVICE, GO TO LISBON!

Hi future possible trainee, I was an IAESTE trainee last summer and I want to tell you my amazing experience I had. Last year I heard about IAESTE thanks to other students, I was curious about this opportunity and ask them for more information. I thought it was too good to be true because the organization can send you abroad to make an technical internship and you would be paid (it sounds great, right?). After that I decided to register in order to be able to apply for some internships (do not hesitate to register, at least to see the proposals). I saw one in Lisbon which fulfilled all my goals (technical and personal goals). Indeed I am studying mechatronics and the internship was in fields of robotic and computer vision. Furthermore it was in the south of Europe in a country I had never visited before. So I applied for it and I was selected!

One week after the end of my exam I was in a plane to Portugal. I was ready for new adventures. I was excited but not very prepared. I did not even know how to cook or how to use the machine to wash my clothes that is why I was sure it would be funny!

Regarding the work there, I was in a laboratory called Vislab (computer and robot vision laboratory). This lab is part of the engineering university of Lisbon. At the lab, I had the chance to contact real advanced humanoids (Icub, NAO, Vizzy). Personally, I worked on the humanoid robot NAO since I had some previous experiences with this robot. My work was to try and



Lisbon,
Portugal

implement an expected perception mechanism applied to the NAO robot and a straight lines detection. This is in order to predict the intersection between the wall plane and the ground plane and also to detect free objects, based on monocular images and sparse range data. Briefly, my robot had a 2D laser on the top of its head and also two cameras. I used the images of the cameras to detect possible objects. Then, the robot had to tilt its head in order to classify the object as an obstacle or a traversable area. I was also free to manage my work. I did not have any precise schedule.

The work environment was very enjoyable. My colleagues were PhD students, Post-Doc students or students so the contact was easy. Last good thing, they love playing

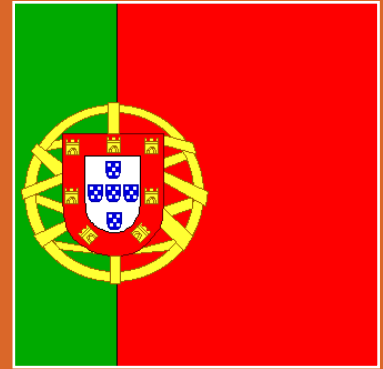
football! It happened many times that we organized football matches during the work hours (and even my professor played with us).

Regarding my day-to-day life, IAESTE found me an apartment with a lot of flat mates (about 10). They were from U.K., Greece, Portugal, Brazil, Spain, Poland, China. As you can understand, it was really an international apartment. We were not all from IAESTE which is good thing since it give the opportunity to discuss with people with different background. During the weekend we visited many touristic places. There are plenty to see in Lisbon, lot of parks, statues, etc. The places that I preferred were the miradouro, they are point of view that offers a panoramic view over the whole city. We also went to the beaches (surprisingly cold) or other

cities. One of them was Sintra, I have a fantastic remember of this city. It is little city in the mountain with a lot of colours, castles and parks. At night, we often go to Bairro. It is the night-life place of Lisbon. Bairro is composed of lot streets where you can just buy drinks and then stay on the street and meet people (everybody speaks English there). At the end of my 3 months-internship I accomplished my professional goals. I learned new engineering skills in real situations, I discovered a bit of the

professional world which can help me to decide a profession (research) before choosing a career. I worked in another country and practiced my English. I also accomplished my personal goals. I visited a new country, I learned to live alone (cooking, cleaning,...), I had a lot of fun. And the most important, I met new friends from all over the world. All the activities I did there with them will stick in my memory for the rest of my life.

PORTUGAL.



MONTENEGRO

THOMAS PAK

The name Montenegro literally means “black mountain” and it is certainly not a misnomer for that little country just under Serbia. Mountains and hills are a permanent feature of the Montenegrin landscape. I don’t believe there is even one place in the entire country where you can avoid seeing geological protrusions in every direction. That’s not all there is though; Montenegro borders the Adriatic Sea which is a popular destination for tourists and locals alike. The coastline is strewn with charming towns of different sizes, providing ample space for recreational and cultural activities. The climate, as well as the atmosphere, is typically Mediterranean. And if you want to feel like you’re in Italy, you could even try picking up Italian radio waves.

My town within this beautiful country was Niksic. As an intern at the Trebjesa brewery, I was allowed into the various departments that worked together in tandem to produce Montenegro’s national beer, Niksicko Pivo (beer from Niksic). The experience was quite enriching, as I had never studied or worked in an industrial setting before. I had just finished my bachelor degree in bio-engineering, so this was an opportunity to see many principles from the classroom applied in the field. Working in an industrial plant also gives you a deeper appreciation for the technology developed to produce such large quantities of products and for the intricate infrastructure that was pieced together to make it all work so smoothly. I learned quite a few things, but



Niksic,
Montenegro

unfortunately the older Montenegrin people weren’t very proficient in English and in some departments the language barrier did pose some problems.

Niksic wasn’t a particularly touristic town, but despite that the town was pretty lively in the evening. When you go out for the city centre, you’ll see sidewalk cafes lined up from one end to the other. The nightlife is not as mind-blowing as in Budva (a very popular coastal city), but you can definitely find some cozy bars to go out to. There are also a couple of lakes around Niksic where you can go and relax at the beach or take a long walk. If you want to be in nature, the go-to place is Trebjesa hill which is basically a forest on a hill. You can see the whole of Niksic from the top, so you certainly shouldn’t miss

that! The place is actually pretty popular so in the afternoon and early evening you’ll see groups of people jogging, children playing, people playing sports etcetera. There are also places in and around the hill where people have carved fitness equipment out of trees, freely available to anyone. To me, it was the perfect after-work playground.

The local IAESTE committee was very helpful in providing me with all the help I needed to get to Niksic and settle down. They got all of the IAESTE interns in Montenegro in touch with each other as soon as they arrived and supplied us with tips and information about places to visit and events to participate in. The wonderful thing about IAESTE internships is that you get together with other people who are just as

adventurous as you. If you're considering going on an IAESTE trip, by definition that means you like to travel and plunge yourself into the unknown. You'll meet other people who are just like you in that respect so you're guaranteed of some great new international friends and a travelling crew.

And travel you will! Because the country is so small, it doesn't take more than a few hours to reach any popular destination by public transportation (buses are the way to go most of the time). Also, everything

is relatively cheap in Montenegro and if you're from an EU country, you don't even need to exchange currencies as they use the euro (even though they're not in the EU). You can take a weekend off to explore the breathtaking Durmitor National Park, where Europe's deepest river canyon is located, you can rent a vacation house in Ada Bojana and relax at the beach or you can hit up Budva and party at Top Hill. The possibilities are endless! Crna Gora is beautiful!



GERMANY



HUNGARY

TIM REYNAERT

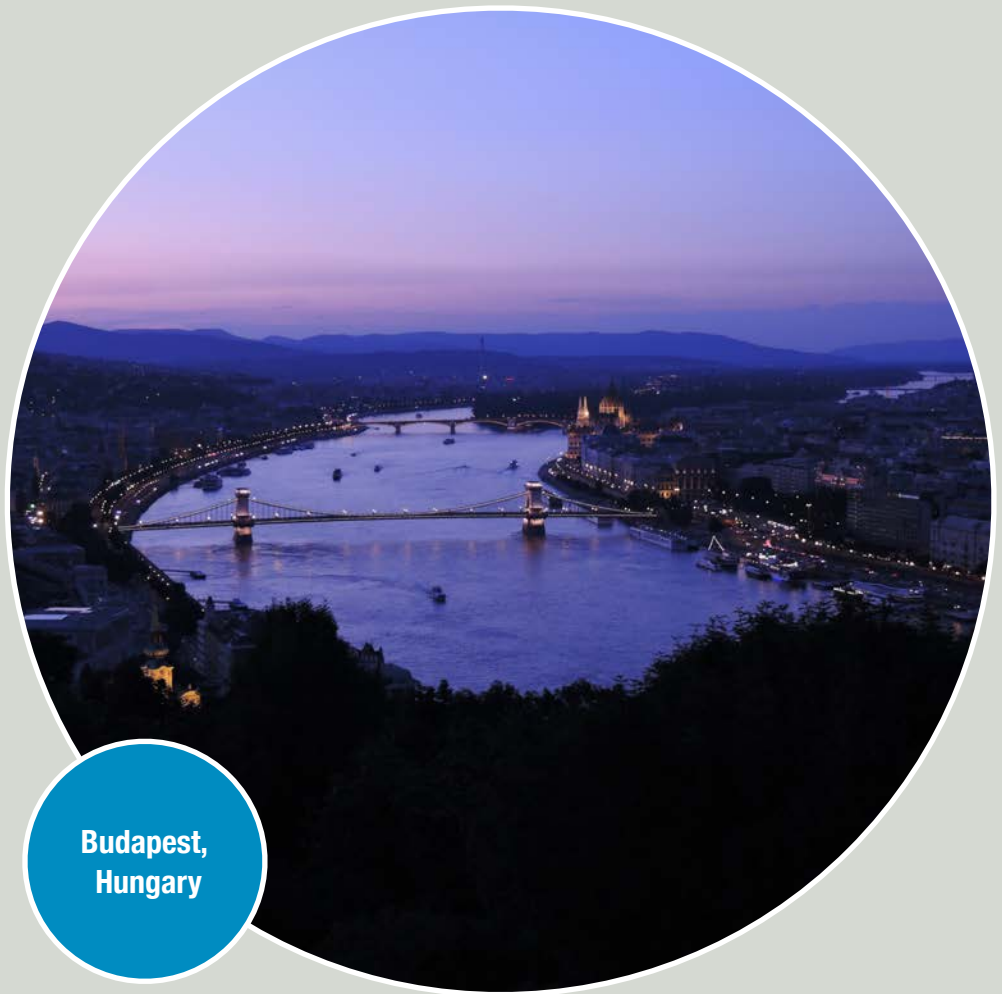
For my internship I went to Budapest, Hungary for 4 weeks. It was so much fun, the combination of work and visiting was perfect. I arrived on a Saturday and was welcomed by Lola, one of the local IAESTE members. She showed me around on the way to the hostel. The day after we went to visit the citadel where we had nice view over Budapest.

After meeting up to get to work with one of the other trainees, Jerico, the first workweek started with meeting my supervisors. Jerico and I worked at the same place, the WIGNER research center, located in the Buda hills, just outside Budapest. I was working at the department space and technologies. My task was to develop an 8-channel temperature logger based on a Raspberry Pi computer. They would use this logger to automate a thermo vacuum chamber. I started by doing some research about technologies I could use.

During the first week I also did some visiting after work. I met up with Amanda, one of the trainees to do some visiting in the city and discover good restaurants to eat. If you want a good cake and coffee, go to Gerbeaud.

And did you know that you actually can take a boat on the Danube River? Maybe yes, but did you also know that this is included in your transportation pass? Perfect to get an overview over the city. After we went to Wikinger, probably one of the best burger places I know.

The LC organized a Hungarian evening. We got to know what the



Budapest,
Hungary

habits are in Hungary. And of course we had some party. During the weekend we went on a trip to Visegrád. There was a medieval festival going on, nice to see.

During week two I suggested to extend the task with a web interface. My supervisor liked the idea. But I had having problems with the hardware, the measured temperature was not correct. Together with my supervisor I was able to find a solution.

One of the days was also reserved to go to visit the planetarium, after that the colleague sowed Jerico and me around in the city. We also went up the Buda-hills and had a nice view over the city. People from Brazil organized a Brazil evening and we did some more partying at

Romkert. For me Romkert is one of the nicest places to party at in Budapest, an open-air club at the foot of the Gellért Hill.

During the weekend I rented a car with an other trainee, Richard, to go to visit the Balaton Lake and Buda-hills. The Balaton Lake is one of the biggest lakes of Europe. By accident we found a nice viewpoint after a little hike. The only suggestion I have is to stay there for one week. You can also go to the Balaton sound festival if you are into EDM.

The third week was more about designing the website and showing the data on the website. But time was moving to fast, not that I didn't had enough time to finish the project, but I still wanted to visit a lot.

There was a Nordic evening this week and we had again a lot of party after work. We went on the Gellért Hill at night to have a beautiful view over the city. During the weekend a visit to Veszprém and Balatonfüred was planned. We partied 4 days in a row, starting on Wednesday all the way to Saturday. Instant, Romkert, Instant and the music festival in Veszprém. Lucky that we could relax near the Balaton Lake in Balatonfüred.

During my last week I automated some things of the Raspberry Pi. I finished the website and tested everything. Writing a manual was the only thing I had to do to finish this task. I wanted to do more visiting but there was not a lot of time left. But the task was almost finished so my supervisor was ok with me taking some days of.

I went for more visiting in the city with Amanda. There was the Hospital in the rock and market. We had nice food at

Gundel and Loa and Richard joined us to Menza. To relax we went to the Palatinus bath located on Margitsziget. Because it was already my last week, I organized a Belgium evening, with French fries and Belgian chocolates. And we partied a lot again because there was the Budapest weekend going on.

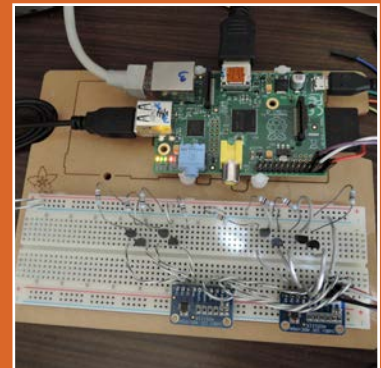
It was hard to say goodbye the last night, I had a lot of fun in Budapest and met a lot of nice people! If you would ask me to go back I would definitely say Yes! 4 weeks was to short...

Thanks to al the IAESTE people and trainees to make this summer one of the best summers!

I hope I can have an experience like this again!

Tim Reynaert

HUNGARY



SLOVAKIA

BEN VAN DOOREN

The theory of copulas is the subject of my internship, which have been taken place from July 16th until August 20th. They are used to describe the dependence between random variables. This theory is getting more and more common in hydrologic and financial calculations.

The first week, I am introduced to the principle of copulas. So the task for the first week is reading some introducing texts and papers and trying to understand the basic theory of copulas. Afterwards, I am introduced in RStudio, a statistical software program. This is a powerful tool for the calculations about copulas.

Random sample of Normal copula

Hydrologists are interested in extreme values of the water flow and volume in rivers, especially for the designing of water related buildings. During the last 100 years, the flow in the Danube have been measured. For this subject, the copula models are used to describe the relationship between the water flow and the water volume of the river. For a given flow, the hydrologists want to know the extreme water volumes.

Therefore, different models have to be fitted and tested. Also marginal distributions of the variables have to be estimated. Finally the quantiles of the best fitting model are calculated. These quantiles are the results the hydrologists want to know, and so the final purpose of this internship.

Bratislava,
Slovakia



After six weeks of working with copulas, I can say I've learned a lot about them. They are fascinating, and above all, useful. It is interesting to be introduced to a whole new subject. With this new subject, a lot of questions came to me, which I could discuss with the assistants. Especially Tomas was very helpful to me, you could say he was my personal teacher during my stay in Bratislava.

The other aspect was to get used to working with new software. As any kind of software, it has its advantages and disadvantages, which I've seen a couple of times.

When I arrived, the IAESTE people in Bratislava waited for me at the airport. Afterwards they showed me all the important places and explained what to do. In the flat, I stayed with five other international students. Everyone is there with the

same purpose, learning a lot and having the time of their lives. So you just stick together and plan a lot of things to do in the evenings. In the weekends, the IAESTE people organize trips so you just have to join them. You go out and see other cities and neighboring countries. And you just make some fun!

These six weeks of personal research about copulas were a very good training. I will definitely be able to use the researching skills I trained during those weeks later on in my (academic) career.

The most important aspect of all, is the six-weeks-stay in a foreign country. Training your language skills, and especially, your social contacts. You arrive in a city you don't know, with people you don't know at all. A new culture to discover, different habits to get

used to. But at the moment you leave, you have to leave behind a dozen of new friends, and you take unforgettable memories with you. I would like to say thank you to all those kind people!

These memories are what I will never forget about this internship.

SLOVAKIA



INDIA

CYNTHIA PAUWELS

I left Belgium with a lot of doubts. Why am I doing this? Traveling on my own to the other side of the world? Will it be dangerous, will I meet nice people,... But I'm so happy I didn't give in to my fears and just did it! It was really like they say: India is incredible! I loved every moment that I was there and the 2 months were gone before I knew it! So I'll try to describe my adventure here, but I have so many stories that it will be just a glimpse!

I'll start at the beginning of my adventure. When I landed at the airport there was a cab outside waiting for me, to take me to the office of the LC. This feeling of being taken care of never stopped. The LC is well organized and consists of very motivated people. They made me feel like at home from the very first moment and took really good care of all the interns. The office of the LC was also the place to meet. There was always someone to have fun with or to go for some food!

The next thing they did for me was bringing me to my room. I was staying in the "new ladies block" which was finished only 6 months before I arrived. So I got a room for myself in a pretty modern building. This block stood on the campus, which was a guarded island in the little city of Manipal. Then in the evening they took us out for dinner in one of the many restaurants on



Manipal,
India

the streets. This appeared to be something we would do for every meal because it's not possible to cook in the blocks. But if you're good at ordering you'll get heavenly food, especially for a vegetarian, like me!

I was working in the laboratory with bacteria to find a better anti-malaria drug but actually I didn't get so much work experience. Most of the time I had to work only 4 hours a day. But I did learn one thing: being a researcher in India is pretty hard, because of the lack of supplies and good equipment. My teacher who assisted me the whole time, was really nice. And in the end she became more like a friend to me. During the times we had to

wait for our experiments, we had many cozy chats. And for our farewell she made us the best dinner we had in India!

When I didn't have to work it was time for fun, fun, fun! Every weekend we went on another trip to the south part of India. We often took a sleeper bus, where you're literally thrown in the air because of the bumpy roads or rent a little bus for all the enthusiastic people who wanted to go on the trips. I saw too many amazing things that it is impossible to describe it here. But I'll try to give a summary. I saw a wonderful ancient city, beautiful nature, animals, temples, paradise-like beaches, a lot of cows, crazy traffic, waterfalls,... We rent

motorcycles, got so wet of the monsoon that it felt like swimming, walked in the rainforest ambushed by leeches, did some yoga with view on the rainforest, felt like a model because every Indian wants to be on a picture with us,... There is so much to see and do and every day brings something new and exciting. India is really a country of contrasts, it has beautiful nature and friendly people, but at the same time, there's a lot of poverty and rubbish laying around, and not a lot of people seem to care. This was sometimes a bit hard to see for an environmental technologist.

The last two weeks of my internship I got permission to get free from work and together with 6 friends we set off to travel around Northern India!!! This was really the ultimate experience. We got to see so much more of India. We visited awesome places like the Taj Mahal, fortresses, palaces,... We

slept in the desert under the starry sky, rode camels, got stuck in the most crazy traffic jams, took really crowded trains,... and the best thing, we became friends!

So after my 2 months it felt really like saying goodbye to my second family. So it's sad and fun at the same time because now I have friends over the whole world! But I am sure that whenever I'll be around, I'll be very welcome!

So to summarize, I saw many incredible things, got to know an incredible culture, met so many incredible people and had just the most incredible months of my life! If you've got even the tiniest thought of going with IAESTE abroad. Then don't hesitate, just go for it and jump into this really amazing adventure!



INDIA



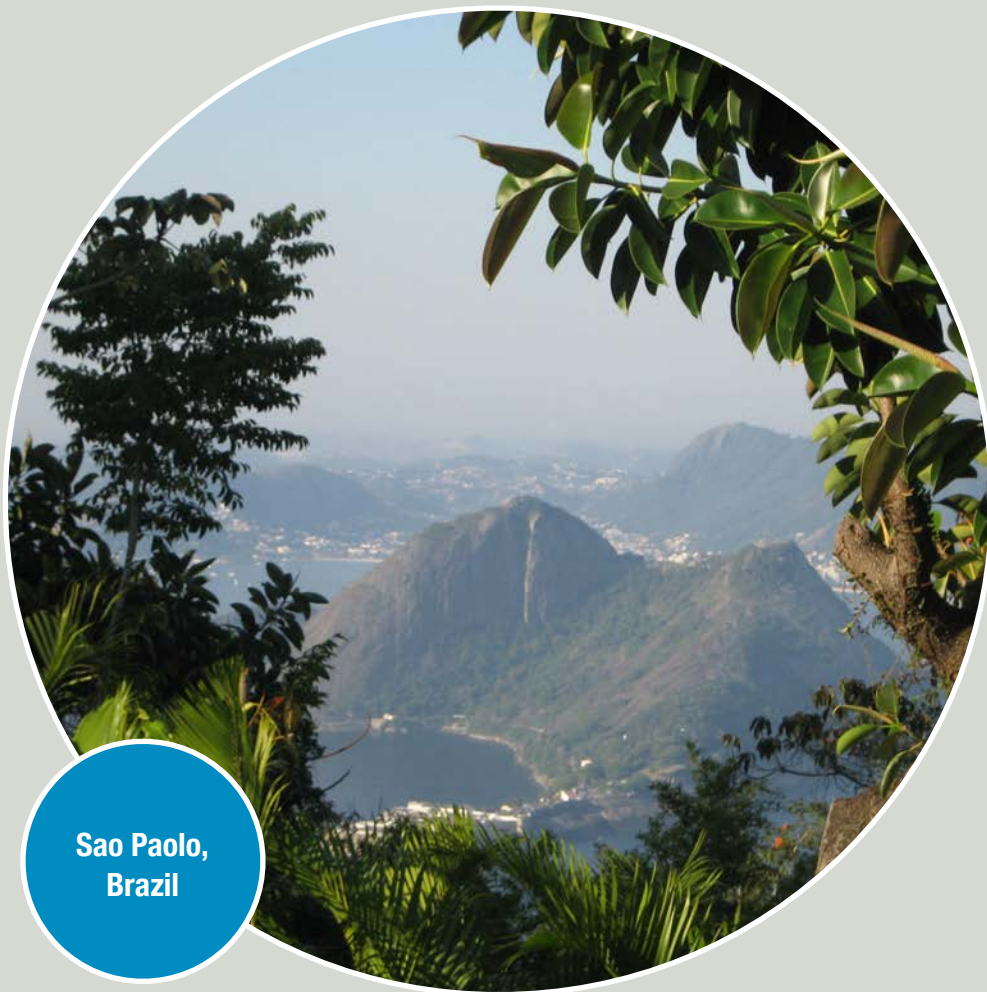
BRAZIL

NIELS VERDOODT

For a while now students from bio-engineering can also apply for an internship with IAESTE and from the beginning it looked like a really great opportunity to me. It's like a mini-Erasmus with work experience instead of classes and you can travel a lot farther than Europe.

Was I excited when a big, Southern-American country like Brazil came up in my list of available internships? Yep. Was I thrilled when I saw that I got my first choice? Very much. Was I nervous when I took the plane on my own for a flight of 13 hours and a stay of 2 months? Hell yeah. No need for that though, flight went smoothly and when I landed in Guarulhos there was someone to pick me up and show me the bus station so I could get to my hosts: Matheus and Daniel, 2 medicine students who wanted to share their apartment with me.

First thing you need to know about Brazil is that it's a very, very, very big country. A three and half hour bus drive just got me in the next city so distances are way bigger than in Belgium. The good thing is that they have amazing bus companies who will drive you overnight to your destination. In that case you save yourself a night in a hostel too. It is still a developing country so don't be surprised to see slums next to newly built shopping malls. Where there are no buildings, nature still reigns and little pieces of jungle are all around the highways. Oh, and around July-August it's winter there which just means it's dry season.



Sao Paulo,
Brazil

Less mosquitoes and most of the time it's still around 25 °C.

I worked at UNESP, one of the universities there, so I didn't get any credits for it but honestly, that doesn't change anything about the experience you get. My work was to test a mixture which included gold nanoparticles for detecting pathogens. It was a good refresher of my laboratory skills and you really learn how to sort out things on your own. All those little things you only see in exercises (like making a pH adjustment from 6,8 to 8) now came in handy. I could even work with an actual TEM! I had to work from 9 AM till 16 PM but if I wanted to take a day off to visit something they didn't make a big deal out of it. Brazilians are very friendly people and it's easy to start

a conversation with someone and make new friends.

In the weekends you're free so get up and see some things! During my first trip I met some other IAESTE trainees, Angela and Frank from the UK, who quickly became my travelling friends for the rest of my stay. First on the list was Ouro Preto, an old mining village with small streets and Mediterranean houses. While visiting an abandoned mineshaft we met some people who invited us to a fancy bar the next night (like I said Brazilians are really friendly people) where they had lots of special cocktails, even one with potatoes and ginger in it (which didn't taste that good to be honest). Next day was Belo Horizonte, a very open city that's famous because it's the

town with the most bars per square meter in the world.

Other remarkable trips were Rio de Janeiro and Foz do Iguaçu. Rio is all that. It's all the things you heard about and you haven't been to southern Brazil if you didn't visit Copacabana beach. White sand, palm trees and waves that could easily pick you up a few meters. When we wanted to play some football we were immediately joined by some locals who wanted to play along. Brazilians LOVE football so most of the time you can find someone who wants to play a game if you're into it.

But Foz do Iguaçu was the trip I would certainly redo if I ever get the chance to do so. It's home to the longest series of waterfalls in the world and the view is simply breathtaking. If you can find a good guide (because crossing the border can take a while)

you can visit also the Argentinean side of the falls where the park is much bigger. Almost like in an amusement park, you can take a seat on a boat that goes up to the river and very close to the waterfalls. And if you're in for a walk, you could go to the farthest side of the park and swim in a natural pond or even refill your water bottle underneath the waterfall.

To sum it up: an internship like this is a unique experience where you'll visit places you probably would never see and meet people you would have never met if you'd stayed on the 'tourist path'. And you can combine it with your first little bit of working experience. Brazil has a lot to offer so I might definitely go back and see some more of this amazing country. Fallo!

BRAZIL.



GERMANY

YENTL PAUWELS

I am a first year master student in chemical engineering. This summer I did an internship in Berlin at the Federal Institute for Material research and Testing where I have been working around dust explosions. This internship was for a period of eight weeks and I thought, before I left, that this would be quiet long. But eventually I discovered that eight weeks is not long at all. Time runs fast when you are having fun.

When I came to Berlin, I didn't know what to expect. But there was no need for because I had a 'buddy' from the local IAESTE organization. A 'buddy' takes you around Berlin, she/he introduces you to friends and so on. I met my buddy on my very first day in Berlin and I made my first friend. I arrived when the World Cup soccer was going on and that was immediately a great chance to meet more people. Together with the friends I met by then we saw Belgium losing against Argentina at the Reichstagsgebäude, and we saw Germany winning the World Cup. This was the start of my internship and I knew I would have a great time there.

There are many reasons why this summer was the best summer I ever had. I will try to convince the doubting reader with the following arguments that an IAESTE internship is worthwhile.

First of all, you make a lot of new friends from all over the world. In my case: Germany, of course, but also Costa Rica, Australia, Russia, Spain, USA, Ireland and Tunisia. It is great to meet all those cultures and it gives you a good excuse for future



Berlin,
Germany

holidays, for just a few days to a nearby country, or for maybe one day crossing the ocean to go to the USA or to see how my Aussie friend lives in Melbourne.

The second reason is because it is good to have some business experience on top of school knowledge. My topic was about dust explosions and I didn't know much about it and I gained a lot of knowledge during this internship. My colleagues were great and were always willing to answer my questions.

The third reason why you should go abroad is because it is a great chance to explore intensively a new place. For me it was a pleasure to discover Berlin, its rich culture and history, and to be in contact with local residents.

Berlin is a huge city (in Belgium norms) with a lot to do. It is just impossible to get bored. I lived in

the district Neukölln and it took me quite some time to pronounce that without accent. I still have difficulties to pronounce German words and the names of the U-Bahn stations were a nightmare for me (Schlesischer Tor). But eventually, I could pronounce it and I felt more German every day. I discovered some great German bands that still sing in German. Marteria and Cro are bands I never heard from before, but they do have some good music and you will hear their new hits in clubs. Warschauer Strasse is the place to be for a night out and everyone that ever went there will notice immediately that this can't be compared to 'de Overpoort'. Berlin is way more alternative than every other city I ever went to. And there is no place where this can be seen better than in the Warschauer Strasse.

IAESTE also offers you the chance to go on weekends to other places in Germany. I joined trips to Leipzig, Hamburg and Potsdam and guess what...I met again a lot of new friends.

Discovering Berlin I also learned something about German people. I mentioned already I experienced their friendship a lot, but beside that I learned that they feel very responsible about remembering the history.

It has been great learning about the German culture and the pleasure was all mine to teach my friends about Belgium. It happens to be that this little Belgium is an un-known place for most people, and yes, even for the Germans. I had to convince them that French fries are from Belgium and I made everyone very clear that Stromae is NOT from France. I also

tried to convince them that Belgian beer and chocolate is the best, although I probably failed for that.

So I am very glad I did an internship this summer and I am very glad I went to Berlin and I am very glad I did the internship with IAESTE.

For the ones that are still doubting, just this: go for it. You won't regret it.

GERMANY



CZECH REPUBLIC

TIMOTHY VANDEWATTIJNE

Last summer, I spent 6 weeks in Prague. During those weeks, I worked, I visited the city, but most of all, I had a great time.

Unlike most student cities, Prague actually has 2 IAESTE organizations. One for the engineering faculty and one for the chemical faculty. This has the benefit that there are a lot of activities and a lot of foreign students there.

The IAESTE students were located at various locations spread all over the city. Just like in Ghent, the university provides housing in the form of dorms. Unlike Ghent, these buildings are huge. Luckily, during summer, most students go home, so it was quite peaceful in the building. Sazava, my building, was part of a complex of 6 similar buildings, each 12 stories high, housing 80 students on one floor. Naturally, there was only 1 washing machine and only place for 4 people in each of the two elevators in each building. Since my room was on the 10th floor, my daily routine included about 300 stairs (not needed, but waiting for elevators take up a lot of time otherwise).

Blanice, the local pub, was the greeting point for Sazavians. Beer was cheaper than water and hamburgers were cheaper than Cola. From there, we usually travelled to some part of the city



Prague,
Czech Republic

for some activities or sightseeing. The local IAESTE committee clearly wanted us to have some fun and organized some free activities such as lasershooting and karting. Those always resulted in some crazy chain of events happening, such as a Polish guy running head first into a wall and ending up in an ambulance.

One of the things that amazed me most was the public transport system in Prague. It just works. No problems, no delays, no confusion and very cheap. You have one ticket that gives you access to the bus, tram and metro. Every part of the city can be reached in about half an hour. Fun fact, I had to travel 25

minutes to my job and people declared my crazy. When I told them people spent more than an hour in traffic jams everyday in Belgium, they just didn't understand. What was even more amazing, during rush hour, every 2 minutes. This meant you never had to wait for the bus or whatever. The busses also rode at night, again, extremely handy.

Prague is quite an old city, but starting to modernize. Most things look old on the outside, but are very modern and fancy on the inside. Part of the economic boom are the huge shopping malls. Those are open 7 days a week from 9am

to 9pm, or even later. One can literally buy everything over there, ranging from milk to a car. (One in the city even has an animal market, some fresh do-it-yourself bacon anyone?).

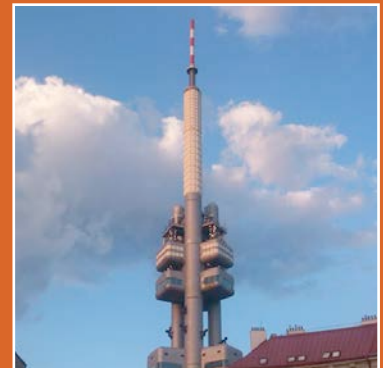
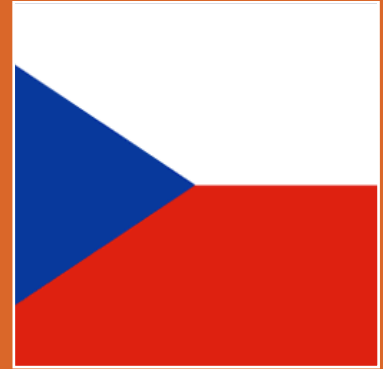
Since Prague hasn't gotten the Euro yet, everything is still in the local currency, Czech Crowns. This has the benefit that locally produced stuff, such as food, is extremely cheap. Business lunch everyday included 3 courses and only cost about €3. Even McDonalds is cheaper there, a €1 hamburger costs only €0.70. Speaking about fastfood, in the city center you can find hamburgers just about everywhere.

So I guess I should also say something about my job, since that was kind of

the whole reason I went there. I worked at a small start-up company. At the office in Prague, there was place for 4 people, including me. My boss was a former IAESTE president, so he was really kind and let me leave work early to go to IAESTE events (if my tasks were done of course). Since most people live extremely close to their workplace and don't have to get up early to avoid traffic jams, most offices only open around 10am. This has some benefits for trainees, since I never had to get up before 8:30am.

In conclusion, I can say I am really grateful for organizations like IAESTE that provide students the opportunity to go on such great adventures. 10/10 would recommend.

CZECH REPUBLIC



SOUTH KOREA

MICHIEL DHADAMUS

“July the 30th, Brussels airport. I’m about to board the plane. First stop, Helsinki and then... Seoul, South-Korea. Am I nervous? Yes! Without a doubt but can’t go back now...”

My thoughts when I was about to leave Belgium for my IAESTE internship. I didn’t realize then that I was going to have the time of my life. After a wrecking 15 hour flight I finally arrived in Incheon National airport. After exiting the terminal, I saw two persons holding a paper with my name on it. IAESTE Korea came to pick me up as agreed! Most of my doubts melted away, they were so well prepared! After a short introduction-we got along immediately- we went on our way. We departed for ACE Lab at Hanyang University, the place I was supposed to work at for the coming 2 months. Taking the subway, which was super cheap and reliable, it took us about 1 hour to arrive. At Hanyang station a future colleague of me was awaiting my arrival. I said goodbye to the IAESTE members and went with my colleague to the office. There all my colleagues came to greet me. I was so relieved that they were so friendly! They all spoke English surprisingly well considering that it is not common in Korea. Then I met my boss: He was a great guy with a sense of humor. He immediately called me names because Belgium beat Korea in the world championship.

After chatting a bit with my colleagues, one of them took me to the place where I was going to stay during the traineeship. It was a



Hanyang,
South Korea

Goshiwon. You can compare it with a student room but a lot smaller! Accommodation is quite expensive in Korea so I did not have a lot of options. But in the end, I started to really like my cozy small room. Now everything was set to start with the real experience.

My internship project concerned vehicle control and path planning for autonomous cars. I’m going to be completely honest and tell you that I didn’t like my project. The objectives were extremely vague and I was often briefed late and incomplete. I loved my colleagues but I wished they would’ve been more concerned about my work.

But let us move on to the fun part! Apart from my project everything was absolutely AWE-SOME. For me living in Korea was great. The food is good, if you like spicy that is, and

the people are in general very friendly and helpful. I stayed in the capital Seoul and I could not imagine a safer place to live. There is also so much to do! You could spend several weeks there without seeing everything.

I had to keep in mind that Korean culture is completely different from what I’m used to and I ended up in some funny situations sometimes. Luckily most Koreans don’t mind because you are a foreigner and laugh one you do some un-Korean I spent most of my free time hanging out with other IAESTE trainees and members. We went for dinner and drinks(most of the time both) several times a week. We had a great time and established lifelong friendships. I still miss them every day and I hope to see them again soon. It is so nice to make

foreign friends! You have places to stay all around the world and you broaden your mind. My English also improved a lot.

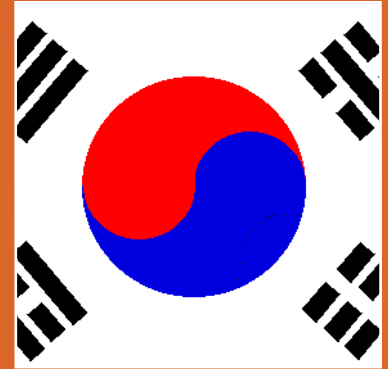
IAESTE Korea also did an amazing job in organizing events. Almost every weekend we could participate in trips to other cities. We visited some temples or monuments during the day and went out to party during the night. Trust me, Koreans know how to party. Korea is a beautiful country and I'm sure I will go back there someday.

I'm not lying when I tell you that I did not regret it a second that I went on this internship. This has been by far the greatest experience of my life and

even convinced me to go on an internship again next year. If you are reading this and are still not sure if you want go or not. JUST-DO-IT! It is normal to be scared but IAESTE provides you with the opportunity to jump into the unknown guided by them. You will leave your destination as a better person.

And in the end... The hardest part is saying goodbye to everyone and everything...

SOUTH KOREA



ECUADOR

BIRGIT VAN HOOF

I am a master student in civil engineering at the free university of Brussels. Although it is not compulsory to do an internship in order to graduate, I wanted the experience of an internship abroad. So during last year I applied for an internship with IAESTE and I was really pleased when I heard I could go to Ecuador for an internship.

In the beginning of August I left Belgium for my 2 months of internship in Ecuador. Once I arrived in Quito, I met my host family and an Austrian girl, who was living in the same host family. The first two days, I was in Quito I didn't have to work yet, so I explored the city center a bit. On my third day, I went to the office of FYI Ingeniería y Construcción, where I would be working for 8 weeks. Fortunately I was able to communicate with my direct boss in English, as my Spanish was not so good. During the 8 weeks I worked in the office I had to do a lot of different things. The first weeks, I mainly had to make schedules for the construction site, in MS Excel as well as in MS Project. After a while I had to do more calculations, in order to help my boss with the price calculations of different project. I also had to work with AutoCad and use the engineering program SAP2000.

It was really interesting for me to design constructions, where the load of earthquakes had to be taken into account, based on the American standard codes, as I never learned anything about the loads of earthquakes on a construction. I directly understood the importance



Quito,
Ecuador

of this, as in my first week in Quito, we experienced a quite heavy earthquake with a magnitude of 5,1 on the scale of Richter. Several days after the earthquake, we experienced a lot of aftershocks.

In the last week of my internship, I went for two days with a colleague of the company to a construction site in the jungle. On this construction site, they were making a road to an oil platform, as well as the oil platform itself. It was really interesting to actually see the construction site, after making the schedule and several calculations in the office. We also went to the camp where all the workers are staying and attended some meetings.

Except from the weekdays, where everyone had to work all day, we went on a lot of trips with the other IAESTE students during the weekends. Nearly every weekend a trip was planned or we planned one

ourselves. So that after several weeks, we decided to stay in Quito itself for some sightseeing, as we actually didn't have time so far to visit it. We visited a lot of places as for example the middle of the world, where several experiments can be done and we also did a lot of activities as bungee jumping, rafting, downhill biking and a lot more. Also during the week, we met often in the weekend to have dinner together and of course a drink or we went to a club.

Some other students decided to go to the Galapagos Islands in the beginning of September for one week. I really wanted to join them, so I managed to get a week of holiday. This was a really amazing experience. We went with 7 students to San Cristobal Island for 2 days and then we took the boat to Santa Cruz Island, which is the main island and also the most

touristic one and there we booked a 2day tour to Isabela Island. The wildlife you're able to see on Galapagos, you can see nowhere else.

After all, this internship was a really unique experience! I was able to travel a lot in Ecuador during the weekends and discovered that Ecuador is a really beautiful country that has a lot to offer. It has a lot of different landscapes, as you can go to the mountains, the jungle or the beach or

even Galapagos and there are also a lot of beautiful cities to visit, as Cuenca, Guayaquil, Otavalo and so much more. I made a lot of new friends, from all over the world, who I will visit again in their country. It was an amazing experience.

TUNISIA



SOUTH KOREA

MICHAEL GHIJS

'Work. Experience. Discover.' This is the slogan of IAESTE Korea, as well as a perfect summary of my internship there. Those two months just flew by like a lunch at the company cafeteria - Koreans don't waste a lot of time having small talk, they eat *balli balli*! It was amid that fast Korean society that I found a lot of warm-hearted people, an international wild bunch, a motivated organization and an interesting and challenging work experience.

I was pretty nervous when I traveled to my workplace the first time, where I was supposed to 'work with fermenter, HPLC, gel electrophoresis, etc...' The Korean Institute of industrial Technology rose up from between the dark green Korean hills and exhibited a mysterious and uncanny atmosphere. I was met by a friendly Korean guide, who led me to the grandmaster of the lab, who then assigned me to my job to become a fermenter expert. On this journey I was accompanied by a Swiss alchemist, a Hungarian gym championess, an Indian tale-teller, a group of funny speaking Vietnamese – who provided me housing – and a number of Korean colleagues, who richly offered me a lot of 정. This stands for the Korean big-heartedness, which is hard to define but as a kindness the Koreans naturally secrete and share with everyone. We had a great time with lots of chicken and beer, exhausting soccer matches, belly-filling after-work dinners and intense, sometimes funny smelling lab experiments. The journey was exciting and mind-altering and, in



South Korea

the end, I received the black belt in fermentation.

Then on 불금, the Korean 'Fire Friday' that ends the working week, a fantastic weekend awaited us with the IAESTE-gang. Whether it was a trip to one of the many fine museums, a spirituality-enhancing stay in a Buddhist temple, a dive into the Korean reggae scene, another amazing visit to the metropolis of Seoul or splashing in the seawater in Busan: you knew you were in for a great time with the fellow interns. The crew consisted, next to my Swiss 'compagnon de route' and Hungarian lab-partner-in-crime, out of two Kazakh horse-milking party animals, a Czech girl who was Korea's last beacon of sarcasm, a Norwegian skyscraper, a Swedish mud crusader, a Mexican beach boy, a Polish music therapist, an Austrian drinking mate, a Spanish smooth talker and also a guy from

Leuven, whose native language was the weirdest of them all. We were under the safe guidance of three small but very brave Korean girls, of which one was a wise professor, the other one the greatest traveling agent and the third a merry free spirit. They were assisted by a few young DMZ-veterans, including a former sergeant and recon trooper, who were in the IAESTE Korea student club. Whether we were wrecking Hongdae, the hottest partying place in Seoul, rolling in the mud like pigs at the Boryeong mud festival, making 108 Buddhist bows at the temple stay or chasing each other in the alleys in Busan, it was always us versus this crazy country where nothing was what it seemed.

And yet, we were not mere tourists, we were interns, we lived and worked there and fully experienced

the ever-developing Korean society. The image of the reserved, hardworking and fast-living Korean was fully confirmed during my time at the research institute, yet it also revealed the people's ability to deal with that and their positive attitude to make the best out of whatever resources they have. The prime example of that is their cuisine, the best fast food in the world, as you are served immediately with delicious side dishes while you wait 5 min for your spicy soup, tasty Korean BBQ or magnificent noodle dish. Also all the other cultural trips, into nature, music or spirituality, were gobsmacking, beautiful and always fun, in which IAESTE Korea did a fantastic job

accomplishing that by accommodating, guiding and informing us silly foreign guys. Yes, the internship in South-Korea looks great on my résumé, but in my mind is where it truly shines. 감사합니다 to everyone who was a part of that.

SOUTH KOREA



GERMANY

CAROLINE HEYLEN

Whit graduating in sight, I thought it would be a good idea to take some time abroad with IAESTE. Consequently I left my home end of August 2014 to live in Freising for 2 months, a friendly city in the neighborhood of Munich. I know Germany isn't exactly the most exotic place to go to, but let me tell you about the exceptional time I spent there.

The LC of Freising had **arranged** my arrival perfectly. At the airport the secretary picked me up as agreed and took me to my home where I would be living for the next two months. Also on my first working day a colleague, and also IAESTE trainee, showed me the way to our office. I worked for the department of Ecology of the Weihenstephan University of Freising in a team of Phd's, engineers, a couple of IAESTE trainees and some German volunteers. What I will never forget was the kindness of the team. I'm not sure if I was only lucky, or if this is how German colleagues act, but the atmosphere at the office was amazing. Events like birthdays or when one of the IAESTE trainees was leaving, we gathered around the coffee table. During when of these occasions I had the opportunity to experience a traditional Bavarian breakfast with pretzels, sausage, sweet mustard and last but not least...beer! We gathered around a long table which was placed in the hall way and a big pot of boiled white sausages was passed on. And apparently, it was no problem to have a beer at the office and at 10 am. This team of enthusiastic workers was the best environment one could wish to end up in. Of course there was also



Freising,
Germany

work to do. We worked on the topic of climatic relevance of CO₂, NH₄ and N₂O plant emissions in different environments. My main task was fieldwork. On average twice a week we went to the field, which meant we had to start our day at 5 am and end it at 5pm. Not only the days were long, also the actual work was quite tough; it involved lifting and positioning heavy chambers to capture the emissions of the plants. Consequently the days spent at the office instead of the field were rather calm to give us some time to recover with a minimum amount of computer work.

However, the more memorable times were spent outside of the working environment. As I mentioned before, I was living close to Munich - aka the 'Walhalla of Oktoberfest'. Already the second week after my arrival, a variant of the original Oktoberfest was held in Freising, my temporary hometown.

This meant two weeks of drinking beer in one liter mugs, eating traditional food and singing German Schlagers. Bavarians are very proud of their traditions and every real Bavarian wears the traditional lederhosen or dirndl. This 'Volksfest' was a perfect way to get to know the other trainees. We bonded really well, really quickly and had a blast! After being able to practice the German traditions, we had the opportunity to experience the real Oktoberfest in Munich. In brief, this can be described as three weeks of partying with drunk international people. Most locals I talked to, told me they actually don't like to go there: the music is bad, the beer is expensive, it is very crowded, almost everyone is a foreigner and everyone is drunk. Nonetheless it is (probably) a one in a lifetime experience and I would recommend everyone to go there at least once!

Yes, Germans truly love their beers. Even more than Belgians do, I would say, but they enjoy it in a different way. The Germans even love their beer so much it is not strange to drink nonalcoholic beer, just to get the taste when you don't want to drink an alcoholic beverage. So be careful when buying beer in the supermarket, because without even knowing it, you could buy some nonalcoholic beers. Drinking on the street or in the train is not that rare here. The standard size of a beer is half of a liter and drinking a one liter beer in a bar or restaurant isn't even that strange too. Also they remain faithful to their regional beers, which means that the beers in and around Munich are different ones than those in for example Berlin. In my opinion however, they tasted all the same and by the end of my stay I truly started to miss our Belgian beers! Every week after the LCs meeting there was an international dinner, prepared by one or more of the IAESTE trainees. Because Freising is close to Munich, most of the Freising trainees also joined the Munich dinner, even though we had to travel

at least 30 minutes by train. A funny thing is, when they asked me to prepare something, it was kindly implied that I would make some Belgian Waffels, so I did! For foreigners Belgium is all about waffles, chocolates, French fries and beer. Most of them don't even know Dutch is an official language here! During the weekends the LC of Freising and Munich organized trips in and outside Germany which were very well received. We visited the Neuschwanstein castle, we hiked around the Tegernsee and visited some Bavarian cities. Also I joined some weekends with other LC's or we organized our own trips. This is how I visited Potsdam, Prague, Vienna, Berlin and Amsterdam. These trips were amazing, but more important were the friends I made. They truly made my internship the fantastic experience I think it was. I met some truly amazing people, I saw some truly amazing places and had a truly amazing time and all because of IAESTE!



GERMANY



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