

## Interview with Mirza from Bosnia Herzegovina

Student's name: Mirza

Home university: University in Tuzla – Mechanical Engineering Faculty

Degree program: Master program – Erasmus + Student Exchange 2020

Exchange period: summer semester 2020

- 1. Please describe in detail the reason for your stay at TH Köln (e.g. degree program, modules, topic of final thesis/project work, name of laboratory, name of supervisor etc.).**

I was a participant in Erasmus + Student Exchange from March 15th, 2020 to August 20th, 2020. The exchange was part of my Master's program, while I was a student of the first semester in Tuzla.

- 2. Why did you choose to spend time abroad in Germany/Cologne/at TH Köln?**

I had a wish for a long time to visit Germany as a tourist or as a student. I took the opportunity to be part of the exchange and spend time on TH Köln. I have not heard of TH Köln, but when I visited the web page of Faculty, I have seen that it is a very nice and modern Faculty. At the same, I was convinced after I came and spent time on TH Köln.

- 3. What is the name of your exchange program/scholarship?**

Erasmus + Student Exchange at TH Köln in 2020.

- 4. What were the most significant challenges during your stay abroad?**

The most significant challenge for me was to write my Master's Thesis because that was one of my tasks during the exchange.

- 5. Did you have any difficulties regarding your language skills?**

I was studying and writing a Thesis in English and I had not any difficulties, but it was hard for me to learn German on the level I wanted.

- 6. Were the courses/exams/projects/working methods different from those in your home country?**

Working method, as much as courses are different than those in my country. In Bosnia, we do not have a lot of practice work and lab work, as I had on TH Köln. Also, as I have seen, students at TH Köln gain a lot of skills, while in my country we learn a lot of theory, which in most cases can not be applied in real work.

- 7. Please describe a typical day during your stay at TH Köln.**

In Germany I liked the most public transportation system. I had an opportunity to visit Bochum and Dieseldorf with a very short drive by train. I wanted to visit some Museums and stores, but because of Coronavirus, that was not possible.

**8. What did you like most about Germany?**

Particularly, I liked the equipment in labs. I had an access to one training station where I learned how to use PLCs. Also, I have seen some robots and machines I was not able to see before.

**9. What did you particularly like about TH Köln?**

I miss living in a big city like Köln and I miss my friends that I met during the exchange.

**10. What did you miss most while being in Germany?**

Typical day at TH Köln was starting at about 9:00 am where we used to learn and practice on training stations or we were assembling equipment for faculties in Bosnia. Assembling the equipment was also part of our student exchange. Profesor Smajic Hasan designed training stations for students in Bosnia and Herzegovina and through the program, we had to do some assembling and wiring. The day was ending around 4:00 pm if it was a day for a German course because we had to go to the dorms and attend those classes. If there was no course, we use to stay until 4:30 or 5:00 pm.

**11. How does student life at your home university differ from the one in Germany?**

In my opinion it differs a lot. For example, student dorms are not so popular in my country like they are in Germany, so the students do not meet a lot of new people from different faculties. Also, students in my country do not have the possibilities to earn money while they are studying. The main reasons are the long duration of the classes in the semester and the lack of possibilities for employment.

**12. Would you recommend a stay abroad in Germany/at TH Köln?**

I would highly recommend it to anyone who has a chance.

**13. Would you have liked more support from TH Köln?**

In my opinion, the support I received from professors and colleagues was enough. Whenever I had some issue, there was a person I could contact.

**14. Why should German students spend a semester abroad at your home university and in your home country?**

I think that every travel is a new experience and that everyone who has the opportunity should take it. Colleges in Bosnia have a different way of working than colleges in Germany, but I don't think getting used to it would be a problem. Most professors and students are very friendly and would do their best to make that stay enjoyable. Bosnia and Herzegovina have many natural attractions, diverse social life, and is a home country to some of the tastiest meals in the world!

**15. Do you have any further comments?**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Erasmus and TH Köln for the opportunity to be part of the exchange. I will remember the experiences and memories I gained for the rest of my life.