

«Kiss me hard before you go, summertime sadness...»

Last month I received a postcard in German. There were impressions about trip to Plitvice Lakes from my friend. I couldn't help but smile, remembering exchanges with SCOPE. I have visited Plitvice during a social program at LC Rijeka and the author of the postcard, my friend, Charlotte Lumma was my LEO in Bochum, where I did the same program with IFMSA. So, a postcard reminded me of two unforgettable summer.

German NMO was unable to confirm any of my chosen cities, because, like many international students, I chose Munich, Düsseldorf and Berlin. They sent me to Bochum. My family and friends have never heard about it before and often asked me in what part of Germany I'm heading for a month. It was my first trip abroad alone and I was scared to death. Where am I going and what is there for me? Who would have thought that I would be so pleased with my internship that I will come back twice already, independently?

Working at hospital, I just didn't notice the time. Under the leadership of the chef of department, I was allowed to do a lot – perform diagnostic manipulations, observing patients at the department of Cardiology. We always had discussions from next diagnostic and treatment steps to aetiology and pathophysiology. Often I didn't have enough space to describe the occurred experience at the Logbook.

Our friendship with LEO LC Bochum, Charlotte, has started from a talk about common favorite serial and she became a special person there... When I visited her last year she organized a typical German weekend specially for me and it was unforgettable!

My exchange inspired me on several important steps. After returning to Russia I applied for a second higher as an interpreter and started to learn German. The exchange helped me to decide on a specialty in medicine - I'll be a cardiologist. And even after the exchange I worked as a nurse in the cardiology department, naturally. Could you imagine, how it was hard and interesting do it all while studying in medical university? Two diplomas about higher education with honors were award for this work.

I really wanted to sleep and rest, and yet this summer, the last possible year of the exchange program, I applied to Croatia. This exchange was completely different. In Germany there were only four of us, doing an exchange, but most of time we were working and travelling separately. In Rijeka we did everything together. Always. With LC Rijeka and other students we've become a true family. We have visited four countries, were dancing and singing at the buses, celebrating birthdays and etc. Thanks to LC folks we had a chance to see everything possible and impossible in that sunny country, to live like Croatians. IFMSA is like a second family. «All of us were exchange students until we met those incredible people, who became your family».

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