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## Personal Experience Report

Intern: Katerina Katsouli, Greece

Company: Burckhardt+Partner AG, Basel, Switzerland

Internship dates: 25.06.2018 - 24.06.2019

In the beginning of my internship, everything seemed quite scary, since I never had the chance to live away from my home country before. I arrived in Basel one week earlier, in order to settle everything in the apartment, explore a bit the city and visit the office before I officially started to work.

This internship was the first job I have ever had. I consider it as a huge opportunity and a door opener for my future. My first day was exciting, my heart was beating really fast and I didn't know what to expect. The office I was about to start working is the architecture office Burckhardt + Partner. It was really big and I had no clue how things work in such firms. In the beginning I was shocked because I felt like there is a big cultural difference between Greek and Swiss people, not only in terms of behavior but also in the way of life. However, with time I realized that every culture has its beauty and it's worth trying something new. Although the absence of the sea was a huge loss for me.





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On my first day, I started with one more IAESTE intern from Slovenia. We ended up spending a lot of time together. In the office I established really strong friendships with people from all over the world. Friendships that I hope are going to last. With some people we are also making plans for the future. I never expected to bond with someone so strongly and intensely in such a short time. We are planning to visit each other often and always keep in touch.

The work environment was really good. I had the opportunity to work on the biggest project of the office with some really talented architects. In Greece I never had the chance to work on such big projects, to learn about how everything is organized and how all the members of the team cooperate for the best final solution. I also had the opportunity to learn by observing and listening and by the tasks I was given, how to manage big projects, how to organize the team and communicate with my colleagues, and how to use a lot of architectural 2D, 3D and visualization software. Apart from the work time we were going out with partners from the team, having really interesting conversations about architecture and about life in general.

During the summer of 2018 I almost participated in all IAESTE events. I had the chance to travel around Switzerland, explore amazing places and have fun with many interesting people. I even met students from my home university. Every trip was unique and the organizers were taking good care of us and of course had to handle a huge team of “thirsty for fun and exploration” students.

Basel is a city right in the center of Europe. Living there gave me the chance to travel to hundreds of places, explore new cities and visit architectural sites. My friends and I were organizing almost every weekend a trip. Otherwise we were chilling in Basel, exploring museums, sitting by the Rhine with a beer, chatting, and later going to awesome parties.

This is an unforgettable year for me. I told everyone that it has been one of the best years of my life and it changed me in many ways. I would really like to come back to Switzerland after I finish my university. If you have the opportunity to do an internship in Switzerland, go for it. And stay for at least one year, not less! Actually, one year is not enough!