

In my internship I was working at the FSB (the faculty for naval architecture and mechanical engineering of the university of Zagreb) in a research group. Their research involves energy planning and focuses on the transition towards renewable energy sources for the future. In my time there I was modelling Switzerland's energy system (since they want to model as many countries as possible) and got to figure out possible scenarios for the future. I was working in an office with other people from the group and had my own desk there and would go eat lunch with my colleagues or sometimes for a beer after work.

How did your traineeship influence your personal development?

My personal development during my internship is a nice addition to the great time I've had. With being in a foreign country and not speaking the national language I learnt to just ask people for help, being open-minded about meeting new people, just saying yes to new activities and experiences and independently work through occurring problems. But not only the situation made me grow, I also learnt a lot of new things at work and grew more self-confident with presenting results and interacting within research groups.

What differences did you notice in the way work is conducted in the foreign country compared to Switzerland?

One difference is the working hours. I only had to work for around 7hrs/day and so no one expected me to be around earlier than 9 o'clock. This was quite nice for me, since I had more time to spend with my friends there and do after-work activities. Another one is the work style: I was highly surprised when my supervisor took me to a brewery for lunch and we had a beer tasting before continuing work in the afternoon. Also, the equipment is not as I am used to from Switzerland. It was necessary to bring your own device and organize missing pieces or repairs yourself.

What will you miss most when back home?

What I miss most are the excellent bakeries and the coffee culture. Every morning I started my day with a delicious chocolate croissant and on the weekends I was tasting the best pastries and bakeries in the city. Also, drinking coffee is the most famous activity, which is why you get good coffee at every corner. The atmosphere in the city with all these relaxing people on the weekends was very nice. What I will miss as well is the beautiful nature I got to explore while being in Croatia – there are so many beautiful places and sights and especially advent in Zagreb is truly amazing!



What were the advantages of doing an internship through our exchange organization?

A huge plus is that you meet new people on day one and will reconnect with them very often. There were my roommates, which also were IAESTE interns, and the people from IAESTE Croatia. They also did their best with organizing trips and tours, so we got to see and know a lot about Zagreb and they invited us for drinks after their meetings to get to know them better. The best event was an international weekend which was organized by the local IAESTE committee. We spent a weekend in another town where we were playing games, going for a tour around town and all participants were cooking meals from their home which we were eating at dinner. I found friends so fast with these events which made my internship time even better. Apart from this it was also good to have someone Croatian visiting the offices and banks with you and organizing all the bureaucracy, so I did not have to worry about this.

