

Turkey – Edirne

My internship took place in August 2015 in the Trakya University hospital, Edirne, Turkey. I was placed in the cardiology department.

The first day when our internship started I was a little bit nervous for meeting our professor (Prof. Fatih). Was he going to be strict? Would he speak English? But the moment I saw him, my nervousness disappeared immediately, because he was very friendly and spoke English well. He showed us



Cardiology department – Dino (Bosnia & Herzegovina), Razvan (Romania), me, prof. Yekta, prof. Fatih, Anastasiia (Russia), Andra (Romania)

the department, explained us about the internship and talked with us about our countries, politics, his daughter and places we had to visit in Turkey. After our first contact, I knew that it was going to be a nice internship. The second day we started with a lesson on angina and joined the professor during the visit in the department. Most of the days were like this, with attending the visit and having a lesson. The lessons were interesting, I studied cardiology already, but it was nice to repeat the subjects to memorize them better. The visits were interesting as well, but in the end it became a little bit boring, since most patients had acute coronary syndrome and it was always the same. Our days in the cardiology department were short, mostly from 9 till 12 o'clock. Afterwards we got a lunch in the Mensa of the hospital, very different from bringing your own sandwiches as we are used to in the Netherlands. After lunch we were free to do what we wanted and we were also allowed to visit other departments. We went to surgeries sometimes and I saw a lot of interesting things like caesarian sections, an amputation, and a circumcision.

The main thing I experienced during my internship is that I appreciate the Dutch system very much. For example, we are used to talk to patients all the time and telling them what we are doing, this seemed obvious for me, but now I know it is not. Here in Turkey they do not speak to patients or very little, it seemed rude to me. Patients here are probably used to this, but I think Dutch patients would not accept this. I always thought that our lessons on professional behavior were unnecessary, because I expected that everybody would know how to act in a professional way by themselves. After this internship my opinion changed, since I saw what happens when there is no attention for professional behavior. I really want to be a doctor who respects their patients and sees them as humans.

It was also striking that everybody (also other incomings) were used to wearing their white coats unclosed, wearing rings and watches, and wearing their hair loose. They also all had their

own white coat. I expected that every country would have the same hygienic rules, but now I know that we are an exception in The Netherlands.



Riding bicycles with the whole group - Nergis (Bulgaria), Anastasiia (Russia), Anastasiia (Latvia), Razvan (Romania), Jihène (Tunisia), Zeynep (Turkey), Andra with her boyfriend Anil (Romania), Meliksah (Turkey), Mariachiara (Italy), Dino (Bosnia & Herzegovina), Me, Laura (Spain)

Before I got placed in Edirne, I had never heard about this city. I have not chosen it, because I wanted to go to the east part of Turkey, which is very different from the west side and more conservative. Even though, I am happy that I was placed in Edirne, because it is a small, but cute city and we had a nice group. Our group consisted of ten people from nine different countries (Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Italy, Latvia, The Netherlands, Romania, Russia, Spain and Tunisia) which made it an interesting group. We slept in a dormitory, which was a new

experience to me. Most other students were used to having roommates, but this is not common in the Netherlands. I shared a room with two other girls. This was nice, because you are never lonely when you share a room.

There was no social program in Edirne and we never met our contact persons. Fortunately there were two other Turkish students to take care of us and they did a very good job. One of them did not have other things to do, so he was with us almost every day. We arranged some activities with them, like riding a bike, visiting the mosque and health museum, and making a national food and drink party. Except from this little excursions, we went to the same places most of the time, because Edirne is very small and there is not much to do, though we had a lot of fun. We often went to the university swimming pool, Leman Kultur (a café/restaurant), a snack bar to eat Turkish pizza, or the (very small) mall or city center to go shopping.



Visiting the Selimiye mosque in Edirne - Anastasiia (Russia), Jihène (Tunisia), Laura (Spain), Anastasiia (Latvia), Mariachiara (Italy), Nergis (Bulgaria), me

In three weekends there were National tours organized for all incomings in Turkey and I visited two of them. I went to the Izmir & Pamukkale tour and to the Cappadocia tour. In the other weekend I stayed in Edirne and visited the seaside (in Enez) for one day. Edirne is very far from the places we visited with the national tours, so we had to travel very long by bus. Fortunately the busses in Turkey are very comfortable. The tours were very nice and we visited a



Balloon flight during the Cappadocia national tour

lot of important places, like Ephesus, Pamukkale and Cappadocia. Due to the tours I have seen a lot of Turkey and met other incomings.

I have had an amazing time in Turkey, I met great people, saw a lot of beautiful things, and learned more about cardiology. I am happy that I had the chance to go on this exchange with the IFMSA.