

What is it like to study at a foreign college?

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Choosing a college or a university is a big step which is very likely to influence the professional and maybe also the personal life of a student in the future. Many Slovak students consider studying abroad, as demonstrated by the research of the Centre of Education Management, which operates under the Management Faculty of Comenius University together with Profesia.

Almost 50 percent of Slovak high-schoolers are also considering the option of continuing their studies abroad. Even though the majority decides to remain in Slovakia in the end, the research stated that there are some who left their homeland and became successful in what they do.

High-schoolers in Košice had a unique chance to learn about studying beyond Slovak borders from students who experienced living and studying abroad. The workshop has already built up its tradition. This year 12 speakers have been carefully selected to cover the entire spectrum of fields and countries, such as law, computer science, philology and anthropology.

One of them is **Ádám Urban**, student of Electronic and Information Engineering at Imperial College in London. His subject of study combines mathematics, physics and IT. "I picked the top schools based on the principle of 'go big or go home'," explained **Ádám Urban**, adding that it is one piece of advice he would confidently give to anyone in such a situation. Before he started to study at Imperial College, he had never had the chance to visit the UK except through an airport transfer and a very short stay far from London. "I remember my first day very vividly. It was stressful and busy, because university started right away, but the excitement was overwhelming," he recalls. Furthermore, the older students were always ready to share their insights, so overall, he cannot remember

anything that would have caused problems for him.

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How do UK and Slovak universities differ? Urban points out that the level of teaching that is definitely better in the UK, reflected in the relationship of teachers and students, speaking based on his own experience. The college provides a student with teachers, tutors and teaching assistants. "These are professionals taking their teaching duties very seriously. Students are required to show the same level of seriousness with respect to their studies," Urban noted, explaining that virtually all coursework is submitted on time, cheating is not a thing and being prepared

for contact lessons with teaching staff is natural.

In return, students are welcomed and expected to give suggestions on the teaching process. "As a student representative I can confirm that these suggestions result in actions taken," Urban opined. When it comes to returning home, **Ádám Urban** has a clear opinion. He is not planning to leave at all. "I study in the UK, I had an internship there, I am most likely going to work there for a couple of years," he said, adding that he thinks there is more to life than just work. Currently, with some fellow students from Slovakia, he is organizing Hack Košice, which aims to be Slovakia's first Major League Hacking hackathon. Therefore, he is convinced that he will be in touch with central Europe through such projects in the future. He adds that he sees no obstacles in returning to study in Slovakia.

Barbora Murinová, one of the speakers, studies Computer Science at the University of

Edinburgh. Only during her BA studies, she was able to undergo three successful internships in Google. Her career thus had a successful start during school but she would still like to return home one day in the future. "Equipped with the knowledge and experience gained abroad combined with my affection for Slovakia, I feel compelled to return home and help our little country progress faster," **Murinová** opined. However, she added that it is likely going to take a few more years of satisfying her own personal ambitions in the famous companies of the world before she is prepared to come back and put her skills to use to help her homeland.

Eva Országhová, who studies economics at University College London, was offered work at Amazon in London after her bachelor graduation. Her vision is to work abroad for some time, collect contacts and experiences and then finish her studies with a master's degree. "After a couple of years, I would be very glad to return to work to Slovakia and utilize the experiences I have gained abroad," she said, adding that even during her studies, she has been active in programs supporting "brain circulation", like the Slovak Professionals Abroad Program, Night of Chances and that is why she thinks this idea will remain with her.



Students during the workshop. (Photo by: **Ádám Urban**)