**About Belgrade**

Belgrade is at a regional crossroads. You can reach it by plane, ship, bus or car. It is a capital of Serbia**, with some 1,659,440** permanent residents **(according to the census from 2011)**. Belgrade is located at the mouth of the Sava and Danube rivers, a city of tumultuous history, one of the oldest European cities. Its history dates back 7,000 years. The climate in Belgrade is continental moderate, with an average temperature of 11.7℃.

The remains of Neolithic cultures were discovered in Belgrade, which means that it was inhabited continuously and that the intensity of settling intensified. Many of today’s residential areas in the vicinity of Belgrade lie on the cultural layers of earlier prehistoric settlements. The territory of the city is divided into seventeen municipalities: Cukarica, Novi Beograd, Palilula, Rakovica, Savski venac, Stari grad, Vozdovac, Vracar, Zemun, Zvezdara, Barajevo, Grocka, Lazarevac, Mladenovac, Obrenovac, Sopot and Surcin.

Belgrade is as a monument of nature whose green treasures comprise Kalemegdan, Tasmajdan, Avala, Topcider, Zvezdara, Kosutnjak and Ada Ciganlija. In downtown Belgrade you can also find true natural sanctuaries such as the Botanical Garden and the Great War Island.

**Accommodation for foreign students**

In Belgrade, there are a great number of student dormitories, all of which operate as individual entities, that is, they are not university or faculty campuses. Unfortunately, there are certain limitations which make it hard for foreign students to use accommodation in student dormitories. A foreign student is entitled to accommodation in a student dormitory only if it is stipulated by an inter-state agreement or if he/she is taking part in a project enabling accommodation in student dormitories. Such projects are “The World in Serbia” and “Serbia for Serbs from the Region”. Since foreign students who do not realise their mobility in the above-mentioned projects cannot find accommodation in student dormitories, they have private apartments and hostels at their disposal.

You can find more information on Belgrade’s hostels at: https://www.navidiku.rs/firme/hosteli-u-beogradu.

Renting a smaller apartment may cost 150€ or more, on a monthly basis, not including the bills, which cost some 100€. These prices may vary depending on students’ demands, apartment size, location and furnishing. Students usually opt for renting an apartment with classmates, sharing the cost of bills and rent and significantly reducing their monthly expenses.

**ERASMUS Student Network**

ERASMUS Student Network (ESN) is the largest student association in Europe. It is present in 33 countries in Europe and in Marocco, with over 250 local sections at different universities. ESN was established in 1990, and as of 2007 it has been present in Serbia with two sections, one in Belgrade and one in Novi Sad.

ESN aims at creating a more flexible and mobile academic environment throught the promotion, development and improvement of student mobility at various study levels, enabling thereby intercultural experiences to those students who cannot afford to spend time in a foreign country.

Some of the objectives of ESN are:

* to work in the interest of international students,
* to work on improving social and practical integration of international students,
* to represent the needs and rights of foreign students at a local, national and international level,
* to provide relevant information on mobility programmes,
* to motivate students who study aborad,
* to contribute to improving student mobility and making it more available,
* to look after its members,
* to stress the value of volunteering and an active civil society.

You can read more about this student network at: https://www.esn.org/.

**Recognising international mobility**

A student applying for mobility may, during the application process, consult with his/her teachers and the Academic ECTS Coordinator, in order to make his/her study abroad plan. Study abroad plan defines ahead student activities during mobility, that is, it lists out the courses a student is planning to take in a receiving institution during mobility. Study abroad plan is not a mandatory document for mobility. However, even if a certain mobility programme does not require a study abroad plan as a mandatory document, it is rather desirable to plan mobility activities in advance, in order for such activities to be recognized more easily upon student’s return from mobility. Study abroad plan has an orientational character and its purpose is to help a receiving institution realise student’s planned academic activities, and if a student is selected for an international exchange programme, study abroad plan is used to draw up his/her Learning Agreement. Learning Agreement/Traineeship Agreement is signed by a student, a representative of VISER and a representative of a receiving institution. Learning Agreement/Traineeship Agreement is a mandatory mobility document defining all activities a student is supposed to realise during mobility. This agreement defines and determines all courses a student is going to take, including other academic activities (traineeship, research, etc.) a student is supposed to realise during his mobility in a receiving institution. If it is necessary, there is a possibility of amending the Learning Agreement/Traineeship Agreement, with the consent of all signatory parties. Signing the Learning Agreement/Traineeship Agreement ensures planning activities which would be in compliance with the student’s study programme and his/her right to have all mobility activities recognized as if they have been realised at VISER.

Recognition of the mobility period is a process managed by the Academic ECTS Coordinator of VISER during which student’s mobility results are determined. Academic ECTS Coordinator decides on the manner of recognizing the results achieved at a receiving institution (exams passed, acquired ECTS credits and grades). Recognition of mobility is a procedure initiated by a student. He/she files a request for the recognition of mobility, along with other documents:

* Learning Agreement/Traineeship Agreement, including possible amendments to those agreements,
* Academic Transcript/Certificate of Traineeship,
* Document about the grading system at a receiving institution (if this information is not included in the Academic Transcript),
* Other documentation relevant for the recognition procedure, as requested by the Academic ECTS Coordinator of VISER,
* Copies of all of the above-listed documents.

After submitting the request and all other necessary documents, Academic ECTS Coordinator of VISER, guided by the principles of flexibility and fairness, having consulted with the corresponding teachers and the Committee for Student and Teaching Matters, compares and assesses the similarity between the courses at VISER and the courses at a receiving institution. A full recognition of courses, and activities successfully realised during mobility, is recommended, if they are equivalent to the courses and activities a student would have passed or realised at VISER. This means that the scientific areas and the knowledge gained as an outcome of learning, or studying, must be similar in nature. A full recognition means that a student, upon his/her return from mobility has no additional academic obligations to meet (for instance, doing his/her final work, taking colloquium tests, passing certain segments of exams, etc.) for the courses recognized in the Decision on Academic Recognition of Mobility. A full recognition of courses and activities passed and realised during mobility has the same outcome for the student as if he/she has taken those courses at VISER. Course name, ECTS credits and number of classes are all recognized in alignment with the equivalents of VISER on the grounds that the student has successfully passed that course in a receiving institution. If the content of courses or activities passed or realised during mobility is in significant disagreement with the courses at VISER, or if such courses do not exist at VISER whatsoever, the ECTS credits acquired during mobility are not calculated into the total number of ECTS credits necessary for the successful completion of a study programme and for graduation. However, all courses which cannot be recognised are registered and listed in the Diploma Supplement. If the grading systems of VISER and the receiving institution are not the same, the grade obtained by a student at a receiving institution during mobility, which can be recognised, is converted into the grade which is equivalent to the grade at VISER (“aligned grade“). The process of aligning grades is realised in accordance with the European Commission ECTS User’s Guide. Aligning grades is realised in accordance with the ECTS Grading Table. The national system of grading is used as a foundation for aligning grades and comparing them in compliance with the ECTS Grading Scale. If a student submits all documentation for the process of recognition, the Academic ECTS Coordinator adopts a Decision on Academic Recognition of Mobility, no later than 7 days prior to his/her continuation of studies at VISER.

**ECTS**

VISER applies the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS, or in Serbian, ESPB) as a system of presenting the scope of courses, studies and/or study programmes. ECTS is a system of numerical representation and evaluation of work a student is supposed to invest in acquiring the knowledge and skills set in a study programme, or a study course. Given that the Republic of Serbia is a signatory state to the Bologna Declaration, the Law on Higher Education stipulates that the implementation of the ECTS system is obligatory to all accredited institutions of higher education in the Republic of Serbia. VISER realizes two types of studies – applied studies and short-term study programmes. Each course in an accredited study programme of applied studies or a short-term study programme is expressed in a certain number of ECTS credits, which means that a certain number of ECTS credits is allotted to it. Applied studies at VISER are realised at two levels – undergraduate applied studies and master applied studies. The scope of each level of studies and type of studies is expressed in a total score of ECTS credits. The scope of a study programme is a sum of ECTS credits of all courses in that study programme. A student must pass all courses in a study programme in order to obtain his/her diploma. Undergraduate studies carry 180 ECTS credits, master studies carry at least 120 ECTS, if a student has already obtained 180 ECTS credits at his/her undergraduate studies. Short-term study programmes carry at least 30 ECTS credits and no more than 60 ECTS credits. A single academic year at undergraduate or master studies carries 60 ECTS credits, which means that undergraduate applied studies last for three studies, while master applied studies last for two years. A score of 60 ECTS credits is equal the total average engagement of a student during one academic year over the course of 40 working hours on work days. In order to obtain one ECTS credit, a student needs to invest 25 to 30 hours of work on average. Total engagement of a student in a study programme or a short-term study programme consists of active participation in the lessons (classes, practice classes, practical work, seminars...), but also of independent student work, colloquium tests, exams, final work, volunteering in the local community and other forms of engagement, depending on course content. An academic year at VISER comprises two semesters, which means that one semester in most cases carries 30 ECTS credits on average.

One of the main principles at VISER when it comes to defining a study programme is to offer its students a significant degree of freedom when it comes to course selection, as much as accreditation standards allow, so that a student can adapt a study programme to his/her interests. The idea is to achieve some balance between the scope of the majority of the courses, the workload, and, at the same time, the number of ECTS credits allotted to each course. As a result, most undergraduate courses carry 6 ECTS credits. A small number of courses carry 4 ECTS (English language, German language and Internship), 7 ECTS credits (Electrical Engineering and Engineering Mathematics), or 8 ECTS credits (Final Work). In master studies, the majority of courses carry 8 ECTS credits. A small number of courses carry 6 ECTS credits (Research Methods, Methodology in Teaching Electrical and Computer Engineering, Entrepreneurship and Incentives in the Field of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Electronic Communication Regulation, Student Internship 1 and Student Internship 2), or 16 ECTS credits (Маster Thesis).

**Grading**

A student is given the final grade for his/her display of knowledge for each course at the exam. A teacher describes the curriculum to his/her students at the beginning of the course, explaining in more detail the forms of active participation, pre-exam activities and assignments, as well as the manner of grading, exam content, structure of the total number of points acquired through pre-exam assignments and the exam, including the manner of calculating the final grade. Teachers and teaching assistants who are in charge of a certain course monitor and evaluate students’ work in successfully going through a certain course. Student success is expressed in points. By finishing all pre-exam assignments and activities and passing the exam, a student may get up to 100 points. Those 100 points include the points for pre-exam assignments and activities, which may range from 30 to 70 points. In compliance with a corresponding accredited lesson plan and study programme, a teacher who is in charge of a certain course determines the ratio between the points gained through pre-exam activities and the points gained by passing the exam. After meeting all compulsory obligations related to pre-exam assignments, a student may take the exam. The most common pre-exam obligation, without which he/she cannot take the exam, is the one that each student must complete at least 80% of laboratory practice assignments. After a student has met all his/her pre-exam and exam obligations, the teacher in charge (or an exam committee) grades that student in accordance with the following scale:

* up to 50 points – grade 5 (a student has failed),
* 51- 60 points – grade 6 (sufficient),
* 61- 70 points – grade 7 (good),
* 71 - 80 points – grade 8 (very good),
* 81 - 90 points – grade 9 (excellent),
* 91 – 100 points – grade 10 (excellent-exceptional).

When determining the final grade, a number of points which is a decimal number is evened out in such a way that is transferred into a full number, a higher one. Each of the courses has its webpage on the webpage of VISER with a detailed description of each course, including the information about the highest number of points a student can obtain through pre-exam or exam assignments. You can look up and view all courses in the Course Catalogue.