

**PRACTICAL GUIDE WITH USEFUL TIPS,  
RECOMMENDATIONS, AND IMPORTANT  
REFERENCE INFORMATION FOR THE  
FOREIGN STUDENT**



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„Мост между университетската среда и  
интеркултурната комуникация - как / да / се  
разбираме, докато учим заедно.“*

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DEAR FOREIGN STUDENTS,

This short guide was prepared especially for you with the hopes that it might make your transition from a different country and culture, smoother and help you integrate yourself into the MU-Plovdiv community as easily and fast as possible. We aim to ensure that our great university is to you, not only a learning institution but also a hospitable center with intercultural competence in accordance to the increasingly diverse world in terms of your expectations and beliefs.

We tried to systematize the trajectory of the students from the moment they begin their studies to the moment they finish, including tips and useful information about the path to be walked.

For your convenience, we also included additional information about the city, which every person beginning a life in a new country/city should have access to.

This Handbook is a convenient axillary practical guide which accentuates on the critical moments of your journey as a student at MU-Plovdiv, in addition to other guides in the form of leaflets, university's website, the staff and other events and presentations made specifically for the new student.

We wish you an easy, seamless and successful start to your studies and carrier in this never-ending journey for knowledge and scientific growth.

## I. WELCOME TO MU-PLOVDIV

### DEDICATED TO HUMANITY



Established in 1945, MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF PLOVDIV is a state higher medical school, accredited by the National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency with a “VERY GOOD” score, as per the evaluation criteria.

MU-Plovdiv provides training to students of Medicine, Dental Medicine, Pharmacy, Health Care Management, Nursing, Midwifery and auxiliary medical specialists. The university offers training in Master's degree programmes, following the completion of Bachelor's programmes – Health Care Management and Health Management, and postgraduate training in doctoral and specialist courses in a number of specialties with sophisticated methods.

#### MU-Plovdiv:

- Has been assessed and certified, as meeting the requirements of ISO 9001-2008 in educational activities
- Is the only Bulgarian university honored with the Prestigious 'Best University' Award by Europe Business Assembly and the Club Of Rectors of Europe
- Has been awarded with a certificate of quality from all sectors of Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) education on a Valorization Conference held on the 19<sup>th</sup> of December 2013. Medical University-Plovdiv is one of the twelve organizations that received this prestigious award, by The Center for Human Resources Development (HRDC) in the role of the National Agency for LLP in Bulgaria.

## II. IMPORTANT TO EVERY STUDENT IN MU-PLOVDIV

### 1. Administration of MU – Plovdiv



Prof. Marianna Murdjeva, MD, PhD,  
HMM

## RECTOR

Rector of MU-Plovdiv

Address: 15A Vasil Aprilov Blvd

tel.: 032 602 207; fax: 032 602 534

e-mail: [rector@meduniversity-plovdiv.bg](mailto:rector@meduniversity-plovdiv.bg)





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**Assoc. Prof. Dr. Maria Bojkova, PhD**

Director of the College  
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plovdiv.org](mailto:director@medcollege-plovdiv.org)

MU-Plovdiv is administrated by a number of council bodies, composed of admin staff, student-representatives, assistants, assistant-professores and professores. These bodies work under the supervision of the above shown professores. This system ensures an effective communication and reliable feedback from and to both parties – students and university. All the students at the university have access to all the levels of the administration for purposes of petitions, complaints, suggestions and all kinds of initiatives, of course following the proper channels and procedures.

Although the highest instance in the institution are the rector, deans of faculties and council bodies chairmen, the first step when dealing with administrative matters is the inspector's section. They deal with the everyday matters concerning students, and are the ones who will help with most difficulties a student might have during the year, giving information about the school year organization, exams and some university events. They can be

found on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the main administrative building, at the main entrance of MU-Plovdiv. Their contact details are as follow:

Insp. Penka Kolibarova	032 / 602 302 penka.kolibarova@mu-plovdiv.bg
Insp. Stefka Kableshekova	032 / 602 294 stefka.kableshekova@mu-plovdiv.bg
Insp. Zlatka Petrova	032 / 602 302 zlatka.tomova@mu-plovdiv.bg
Insp. Valeri Nenkov	032 / 602-294 valeri.nenkov@mu-plovdiv.bg
Insp. Denitsa Dobrovska	032 / 602-462 denitsa.dobrovska@mu-plovdiv.bg

## 2. Campuses

The Medical University of Plovdiv has five university hospitals - St. George University Hospital, Kaspela University Hospital, EvroHospital, University Hospital "Pulmed" and University Hospital "Plovdiv".

In the first course students will visit only the first base of "St. George" University Hospital - the one at 15A Vasil Aprilov Blvd (the second base being, the surgical block on "Peshtersko shose" 66 bul.). Most lectures in general are held at the Auditorium complex. On it's last floor is the university's Medical Simulation and Training Center. Here students will be able to train their practical skills using: high-tech dummies for modeling symptoms, conditions and illnesses for the purposes of internal medicine, neurology, pediatrics and obstetrics and gynecology; the latest laparoscopic, arthroscopic and endoscopic simulators for virtual reality.



The rest of the campuses are all around the city as they are part of the network of hospitals attending the needs of the population of Plovdiv. The one common mark they all bare, is the "UMBAL" preceeding the name of the hospital, which in bulgarian means "**University** Multiprofile Hospital for Active Treatment".

The addresses to the other University hospitals are as follows:

Kaspela University Hospital: ul. "Sofia" 64

EvroHospital: ul. "Komatevsko Shose" 79

University Hospital "Plovdiv": bul. "Bulgaria" 234

University Hospital "Pulmed" : bul. "Peshtersko Shose" 60

## UBALAG "Selena"



## UMBAL Plovdiv





UMBAL Pulmed



UMBAL KASPELA

UMBAL Evrohospital



### **3. Academic year: application and admission, semester, exam session, internships**

#### **Application and admission**

Foreign citizens may apply for training in:

- Bulgarian language course (all specialties) – in case they successfully pass the entry tests in Biology and Chemistry in Bulgarian and are ranked in the final rating list of admitted students OR study a one-year Bulgarian language preparatory course at the university, after which they must pass the entry tests in Biology and Chemistry in Bulgarian and are ranked in the final rating list of admitted students;
- English language course (Medicine, Dental Medicine and Pharmacy) in case they pass the entry tests in Biology and Chemistry in English and are ranked in the final rating list of admitted students OR study a one-year English language preparatory course, after which they must pass the entry tests in Biology and Chemistry in English and are ranked in the final rating list of admitted students.

Note that, in all the English programs of study the Bulgarian language is a mandatory part of the curriculum, during the first two years of training and the students need it in order to communicate with the patients from the 3<sup>rd</sup> year on, when their clinical training begins.

#### Information on the Entry exam

The entry exam consists of two tests – one on Biology and on Chemistry, which shall be carried out on the territory of the University, at the Auditorium Complex on dates assigned by the administration.

Only registered applicants will be admitted to the exams.

The registration for the entry tests is carried out on-line at the University website, by the applicants themselves or by their representative, and it consists of two steps:

1. Payment of entry exam fee (for each exam separately) – the fee is nonrefundable.

It must be paid in advance and not later than one week prior to the Entry Exam date by card or by bank transfer.

2. Registration – filling out the registration form with personal details of the candidate, including the programme of choice and the date of the exam.

After the fee is received in the University bank account, the applicant receives by E-mail an invoice for the sum paid.

By using the number on the invoice, the applicant can activate his registration and fill in the application form, including the date of the exam.

The entry-exam registration is successful when the applicants receives a Registration Coupon for the exam which he/she should bring on the date of the exam.

For each exam the applicant should follow the same procedure.

For additional information concerning the entry-exam registration, students may contact the administration either on site at the university or through e-mail: [entry\\_tests@mu-plovdiv.bg](mailto:entry_tests@mu-plovdiv.bg)

### **Undergraduate training at Medical University – Plovdiv**

#### Master's degree programs:

Medicine – 6 years (10 semesters and 12 months pre-diploma clinical internship);

Dental Medicine – 5, 9 years (10 semesters and 9 months pre-diploma clinical internship);

Pharmacy – 5 years (9 semesters and 6 months pre-diploma internship)

The students who complete successfully the full course of studies and pass the State Assessment Examinations receive a Master's Degree in Medicine /Dental Medicine/Pharmacy and the professional qualification of 'Physician'/'Dentist'/'Pharmacist'.

**Note: All programs at Medical University – Plovdiv are full-time.**

For reference, on annual tuition fees check the university's official website:

<https://mu-plovdiv.bg/en/admission/general-information/>



The annual tuition fee covers:

- Participation and attendance at scheduled lectures, seminars and practical lab classes;
- Examination of acquired knowledge and skills via mid-term tests, colloquiums, final semester examinations;
- Use of lecture halls, sports halls, rooms, laboratories, clinics and equipment during the academic year.

The annual tuition fee of does not cover accommodation, health insurance, textbooks and educational handbooks which are at the student's own expense.

Before enrollment, the semester tuition fee (half of the annual fee) should be paid either by bank transfer at least one week prior to the date of the enrollment or on the spot at a Bank Office.

For additional information, on matter concerning administration and foreign student's affairs:

*Foreign Student Admission Office*

University Information Center (at the Central Gate of the University Campus), 1 floor, Offices 1, 2, 3

Medical University – Plovdiv

15 A, Vasil Aprilov blvd.

Tel.: +359 32 602 229 – from 1.30 p.m. to 3.30 p.m. EET

E-mail: [admin\\_en@meduniversity-plovdiv.bg](mailto:admin_en@meduniversity-plovdiv.bg)

[dsapundjiev@meduniversity-plovdiv.bg](mailto:dsapundjiev@meduniversity-plovdiv.bg)

[admin\\_emp@meduniversity-plovdiv.bg](mailto:admin_emp@meduniversity-plovdiv.bg)

### **Semester, exam session and internships**

Every academic year is composed of 2 semesters and at the end of each one of them students will have an exam session. These sessions are the periods of about 8 weeks, in which exams on the subjects studied during the semester are conducted. Aside from the regular sessions (at the end of each semester) there are extraordinary sessions. Regular sessions are two - winter (January) and summer (June), respectively after the semesters. Extraordinary ones are in September and October. If a student fails to pass an exam on the regular session they will be able to go for it again in the extraordinary ones.

To be allowed in an exam session, a student must have two signatures in their booklet for each subject, one from the assistant professor (from the practical training) and one from the professor teaching the subject. The signature is given based on attendance to both practical and theoretical lessons and any additional requirements each professor may state. The signatures are collected at the end of the respective subject's course, which usually culminates with the end of the semester. After getting all the signatures for the respective semester, a stamp is placed on the booklet by the inspector for the year, if all the signatures are in accordance. When all the above has been done, the student is ready for the exam session, in what concerns administrative matters.

If a student has a certain number of non-passed exams at the end of all exam sessions (the beginning of a new school year), then they will not be allowed to pass on to the next academic year. Each year has a specific number of non-passed exams students are allowed to have. At the end of each year, they are as follow:

1<sup>st</sup> year: not more than 2 non-passed exams

2<sup>nd</sup> year: not more than 3 non-passed exams

3<sup>rd</sup> year: not more than 4 non-passed exams

4<sup>th</sup> year: not more than 5 non-passed exams

5<sup>th</sup> year: all exams must have been passed to be allowed into medical internship and state exams

If at the end of the respective year, a student has more than the allowed number of exams, they will have to drop out due to poor academic performance, for a year – in which outstanding exams must be passed. If by the following academic year the exams have been passed, the student will continue on to the respective year, if not, they will stay out another year. The maximum amount of consecutive years a student is allowed to be out of the university due to poor academic performance is 3. After that the student loses the student's rights and has to start medical their course from the beginning, going through the application procedures again.

In addition to the non-passed exam limit, for each specialty and each year there might be compulsory subjects, which must be passed in order for the student to move on to the following year. Those subjects are an "excluding criteria", because even if a student has no other outstanding exams they will drop out for a year, if a compulsory subject has not been passed.

At the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year there are 4 weeks of “nursing internship”, which must have been completed in order for a student to be allowed into the next school year. This internship is composed of 2 weeks of surgical nursing and 2 weeks of internal nursing, which are done in the respective clinic types, determined previously by choice of the student. This choice is given just before the summer exam session begins in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year, by means of a form which must be filled and handed in to administration with the clinics of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> choice of each student, for completion of the internship. Rarely the 1<sup>st</sup> choice clinic is denied. The internship is recorded in booklet which also requires signatures from: the head nurse of the clinic and the physician responsible for the nursing-internship. Signatures are given in accordance to attendance. Students will also be graded in the booklet, according to their performance and participation during the internship.

The 5<sup>th</sup> year is the last year in which a student will be going solely to lectures and practical training. Therefore, by this time all non-passed exams must have been cleared, so that the student can be allowed to begin his/hers medical internship during 6<sup>th</sup> year. In this year each student selects a new group different from the one throughout 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> year. Each of the available groups to select from, have a different order in which the state exams will take place. The selection of the group is entirely the student’s choice, although the 1<sup>st</sup> choice might be denied if the limit number of students for a specific group has been reached. The state exams at the end of each corresponding internship are as follow:

1. Internal diseases
2. Surgical diseases
3. Pediatric diseases
4. Obstetrical and Gynecological diseases
5. Hygiene, Social medicine, Epidemiology and Infectious diseases

Arrangements can be made, in order for a student to complete his/her internship (nursing internship) in a different country, but that must be cleared with administration - the respective inspector, who can most accurately give information about countries which have made such arrangements with the university and validation criteria for the internship. As for the medical internship, it can be completed through Erasmus, but again arrangements must be made with administration.

#### **4. Libraries**

The university has 4 libraries, located at MU-Plovdiv (bul. "Vasil Aprilov" 15A), St. George Hospital (bul. "Peshtersko shoes" 66), Medical College (ul. "Bratya Buxton" 120) and at the dormitories (ul. "Tsarevets" 2).

In order to make use of the facilities and books provided by the libraries, all students need to be registered. Registration may be done at any of the above libraries using the student's booklet and a photo. Registration is free of charge, but note that it has to be renewed at the beginning of every academic year independently of the student's status – continued to the following year or interrupted due to poor academic performance.

From the library, students can borrow textbooks they may need for the year. There is no limit to the number of books allowed to be taken, but there is deadline, to when they must be returned – the staff provides information on the deadlines when books are taken.

Once a student is registered, they will receive login details to the University's online databases, where they will have access to the latest editions of textbooks by world-renowned authors in the field of medicine, dentistry, and more.

#### **5. Dormitories**

MU - Plovdiv has three hostels for its students - two on "Tsarevets" str. 2 and one on "Bratya Buxton" str. 120. Those on "Tsarevets" Str. 2 are near St. George Hospital, "Kaspela" and "PULMED" hospitals. The block at 120 Bratya Buxton Street is close to the Medical College.

The rooms there have been renovated, with two beds and a private bathroom for each bedroom.

There are reading halls, sports grounds, 24-hour video surveillance and high-speed internet available for free for students who live there.

The application forms for the hostels are submitted between July and August, because of the limited numbers, but that doesn't mean one cannot apply for it at any time needed.

Fees are paid at the end of the month and they are all inclusive, they cover: the rent of the room, water, electricity, internet and the use of all facilities at the hostel.

## **6. Organizations: Student Council, Association of the Medical Students Plovdiv, Youth Research Society "Asklepion", Exchanges**

### **The Student Council**

The Student Council (SC) from MU-Plovdiv is a non-political organization, the existence of which is regulated by the Higher Education Act, aiming to protect the interests of students at MU-Plovdiv.

Its members are elected, from the students who are members of the General Assembly of the students (GAS) from MU – Plovdiv.

The General Assembly of the Students (GAS) from MU - Plovdiv is an organization whose members are selected from every course through elections. That way each year has representatives, responsible to pass on the problems and concerns of their year.

### **Association of Medical Students – Plovdiv**

Association of the Medical Students - Plovdiv (AMS-Plovdiv) is an association aiming to bring together medical students from MU – Plovdiv.

A member of AMS-Plovdiv can be any student of medicine at the Medical University - Plovdiv. New members apply through a written application form to the Admin Board of ASM-Plovdiv. An application form can be obtained at the weekly meetings of the Association or from any member of the Admin Board of ASM-Plovdiv.

### **Youth Research Society "Asklepius"**

YRS "Asklepius" is a public, independent, non-political, voluntary association of students and young scientists at the Medical University - Plovdiv.

The association, either alone or in collaboration with other organizations, organizes congresses, conferences, symposia and other forums concerning the problems of modern science.

Participation in the YRS "Asclepius" is voluntary. A participant may be any student or young scientist, regardless of his or her national, ethnic, religious or political affiliation. The association is also open to international participation.

Members have a lot of benefits, for more info:  
<https://www.asclepius.bg/>

## Exchanges

Students can spend part of their training in another country through Erasmus+ or the Medical Students Association from MU-Plovdiv. The exchanges may be for training or practice purposes. More and current info on the exchange programs can be found on the university's website: <https://mu-plovdiv.bg/en/>.

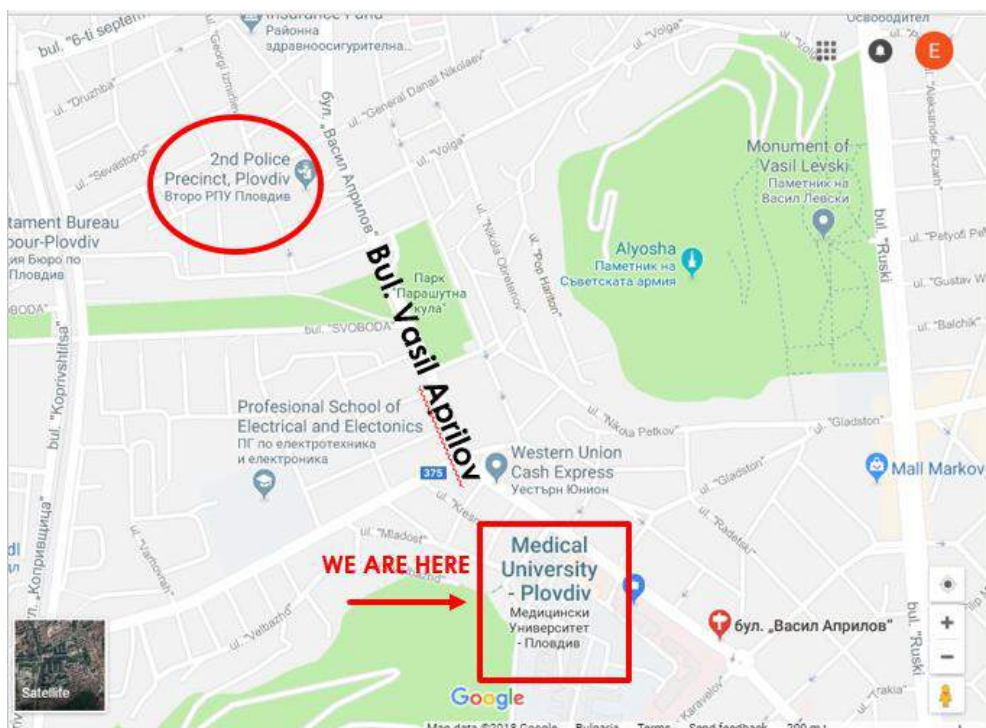


### III. IMPORTANT TO EVERY STUDENT LIVING IN PLOVDIV

#### 1. Police station and emergencies

When a citizens (foreign or local) are trying to contact the police, fire department, emergency medical care, for any other emergencies, they must do so by dialing 112. The operator will redirect the call to the proper department depending on the emergency.

The 2nd Police Precinct, is the closest police department to the MU-Plovdiv, and it is located on "Volga" St 70. It is also where the migration department is located. There any foreigner can address any matter regarding his/her legal stay in the Bulgarian Republic.



The address to the closest to the university, fire department is: First Regional Fire Station - ul. "Preslav" 33. Although in case of a fire emergency, again the number to call is 112.

## **2. Where and how to pay bills, Exchange bureaus, Buses**

**Bills** can be paid at the respective offices of the services providers. There is also the option to go to agencies which process bills from a number of services providers; by doing so one can pay all his/her bills in one go. Some examples of such agencies are\*(NOTE: this is not an advertisement, these are just examples of possible agencies): the Bulgarian post offices, easypay, epay (an online platform), and many others.

**Exchanges bureaus** are almost everywhere all around the city, but there is a significant number on bul. Vasil Aprilov, around the university. Note that all banks, provide currency exchange services.

**Buses** to the university campus at bul. Vasil Aprilov, are quite common and belong to the lines: 222, 17, 24, 113, 66 and 10. Note that if a student will be using the public transportation, they can get a “travelling card” which allows them to ride any public bus, free of charge simply by getting a document which states they are a student at MU-Plovdiv (from the faculty’s admin office - inspectors) and paying a fee for the card at the designated counters.

## **3. Lawyers and translations**

Similarly to the exchanges bureaus, lawyers’ offices can be found all around the city, but there is a significant number of such offices on bul. 6<sup>th</sup> of September.

## **4. Supermarkets**

In the different cities in Bulgaria, dominate different chains of supermarkets. In Plovdiv, examples of such major supermarkets are\*\*(NOTE: this is not an advertisement, these are just examples of possible supermarkets): Leksi, Triumf, Billa, Kaufland, Lidl, and many others. You can find a supermarket near your address by simply searching the internet.

## **5. Tips from a fellow foreign student**

Here is a short list of the most important tips, foreign students have complied to help freshmen adjust to the new environment:



- Get to know the undergraduate programme which you are studying

- Get to know the examination system our university

- LEARN BULGARIAN! In the English program the study of Bulgarian language is a mandatory part of the curriculum even still, we encourage our fellow colleagues to do some extra study of their own, get together with native speakers, learn as much and as fast as they can, because: patients do not speak English (at least most of them do not), as well as some of the medical personal at the hospital and people in everyday life.

- DO NOT BE ABSENT in general, but even more so ON THE FIRST DAY OF A SUBJECT. Learn the specifics of the program for each subject. Studies at the university are dynamic and move along fast, if you lose the train in the beginning, catching up may present to be quite the challenge

- Find the ideal place and way to study – gardens, libraries, home, classrooms, whichever works, but study!

- Join a community and practice Bulgarian with friends – the university has many communities, have a look around and see what suits you best

- When in doubt, ALWAYS ask your seniors! They have already been through most of the difficulties that you might be encountering, and they found a way to deal with them – share their experience!

P.S: Beware of: false taxi companies (ask for a receipt), landlords/landladies (read the contracts carefully)!

Plovdiv belongs to the Thrace region of Bulgaria and has a history that dates back 8,000 years. Throughout time, Plovdiv has had different names some of the most popular being Eumolpias – during the Thracian era, then Philippoupolis - in honor of Philip II of Macedon (Greek era), then went on to become a major Roman city, referred to as Trimontium - meaning "The Three Hills". Since the 9th century CE, Slavic variations derived from the Thracian variant Pulpudeva began to appear until after World War I the name Plòvdiv became the prevalent variant.

Plovdiv has been home to several civilizations. The Ottoman and Byzantine empires ruled here, as did the ancient Bulgarians. Today, Plovdiv is one of the most important cities in Bulgaria and the largest, in terms of population, after Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria.

Here are some interesting facts about Plovdiv.

1. Plovdiv is the oldest continuously inhabited city in Europe and one of the oldest cities in the world



The Thracians established the town around the 6th century BC. Philip II of Macedonia conquered it around 342 BC and rebuilt the city. The Romans conquered Plovdiv around 72BC and the new Roman city became a very important Balkan possession -this is why there are so many Roman ruins in Plovdiv. The Roman Empire expanded the fortress on top of Nebet Tepe, built new streets, a sewage system, aqueducts and one of the most important amphitheatres in the Byzantine Empire. In the middle Ages, the Bulgarian and Byzantine empires fought over it for centuries, only for the Ottomans to arrive and rule it for more than 500 years until Bulgaria's independence.



## 2. The Old Town of Plovdiv is a living museum

The Historical Reserve of the Old Town really is one of a kind. You can see buildings and traces of almost every historical period. Cobblestone streets, the old fortress gate Hisar Kapia, the Ancient Roman Theatre built more than 2000 years ago and till this day it's still being used as a venue for concerts, architectural masterpieces from the National Revival Period (18-19th century), bourgeois mansions and historic churches. Two great examples of this type of iconic architecture are the Hindliyan and the Balabanov house.



The City of Museums - There are many popular museums in Plovdiv which showcase so much of Bulgaria's culture and history. The most popular of the museums are the Archaeological Museum, The Historical Museum, the Ethnographic Museum, the aviation museum and the Museum of Natural Science (which has the largest aquarium in Bulgaria).

Plovdiv's Museum Night is an absolute blast

Each year in September, Plovdiv's historic streets come to life as crowds of young and old explore the city's ancient heritage and hippest new cultural locations. All museums and galleries are free and stay open well into The Night, offering locals and visitors a unique glimpse into Plovdiv's beating heart of inspiration.

Regional Ethnographic Museum







Plovdiv Aviation Museum

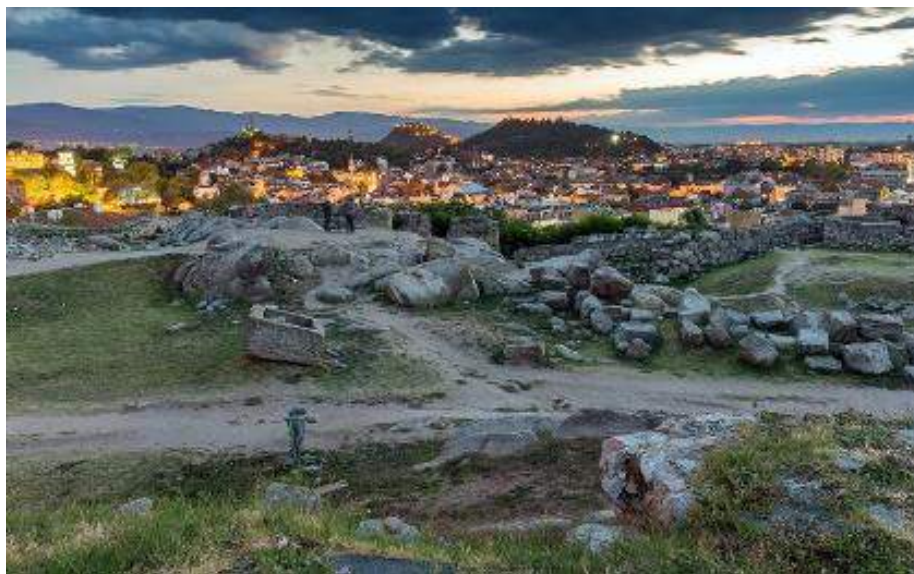
### 3. Plovdiv is called the city of Seven Hills



Plovdiv was built on top of seven hills around the Maritsa River. The 7th hill – Markovo Hill was destroyed over a hundred years ago and used for raw building material. Each of the other six, rises a few hundred meters above the city and boasts incredible panoramic views of its surroundings. The remaining

hills are still known under their traditional Turkish names: Dzhenem Tepe (Youth Hill), Bunarzhik (TheLiberators Hill), Sahat Tepe (Danov Hill); the other three form the so called “Trimontium” - Nebet Tepe, Dzhambaz Tepe and Taksim Tepe.

#### 4. There are traces of the many past civilizations everywhere



Plovdiv is a fascinating mix of cultures and influences

Plovdiv's position on a literal crossroads of Europe and Asia, has given it a particular multicultural character. As a result, nowadays one can find Ottoman mosques, an Armenian church, a Baroque Catholic cathedral and a Gothic Protestant place of worship dotting the city's skyline.

Shared for centuries by Bulgarians, Turks, Greeks, Roma, Armenians, Jews and so many other nationalities, Plovdiv retains its charm of antique cosmopolitanism to this day.

The city is a major cultural center with many ancient remains everywhere. Many of the important historical landmarks and ruins are located in the Old Town and in the city center.

- Nebet Tepe

You can still see traces and ruins from the eastern wall, ancient water reservoir, the postern and parts of a gate and western wall.

- Ancient Roman Theater

The Ancient Roman Theatre was built by the Romans more than 2000 years ago and it's still in use today.

- Hisar Kapia

Hisar Kapia dates back to the 11-13th century but its fundamentals are from Roman times. It was one of the gates to the ancient city of Philippopolis.

- Roman Stadium

The Stadium of Trimontium is amongst the largest (best preserved) structures from the time of Ancient Rome on the Balkans.

- Odeon

The Odeon of Philippopolis was the house of the city council of citizens of ancient Plovdiv. It was also used as a theatre.

- Mevlevi Hane

This building belonged to the Mevlevi Order of Sufis, which makes it kind of a rarity in Bulgaria.

The Mevlevi order was around during Ottoman times but died out in Plovdiv at the end of the 19th century.

All that is left is the hall, or 'tekke', where the sufis performed their famous liturgical dances. It dates to the renaissance period but also displays Ottoman modifications.





5. The trendy district of Kapana used to be a popular craftsmen center over 5 centuries ago

Around the time of the National Revival, the city thrived in the crafts and trade. Back then it was all about gold, iron, leather, and weaving. Now, contemporary creative entrepreneurs have transformed the little neighborhood into the trendiest, art district in Plovdiv.



Plovdiv's main shopping street is the longest pedestrian zone in Europe

The street begins at the Trimontium Hotel which is just next to the Garden of Tsar Simeon and stretches down to the famous Roman Stadium and Dzhumaya Square. From there you can go further and cross the Maritsa River via the covered pedestrian bridge.

Along the main road, you will find many shops, cafes, restaurants and a beautiful garden with fountains.

The main shopping street is one of the most popular places in the city. You can access the Old Town from the main street and the Garden of Tsar Simeon.





The oldest building in Plovdiv, which is still used, is the Dzhumaya mosque.

Its original name is the Muradiye mosque because it is believed to have been built during Sultan Murad's time. The building is remarkable in itself, it is not only as a religious but also as a cultural and historical temple.



Plovdiv Roman Stadium

At one time this 2nd-century stadium could seat 30,000 spectators, although today you can only see fragments of this structure. It sits beneath parts of Plovdiv's Old Town but the best views can be had from Dzhumaya Square where you can look over the railings down to a large section of the stadium's seating.



6. The region of Plovdiv is famous for its amazing wine production

Plovdiv is located in the Southern region which is an official winemaking district called "The Thracian Valley"

The region is famous for its red wine production and is home to the popular local grape – Mavrud.



7. The Rowing Channel in Plovdiv is the largest of its kind on the Balkans and the Plovdiv Stadium is the biggest in the country

The Rowing Base is a 2.2-kilometre long channel, 120 meters wide and 3 meters deep. Local sports clubs regularly use the base for practice and competitions. The area around the channel is open to the public for leisure, socialization and sport.

The Plovdiv Stadium has 55 000 seating positions in comparasion to the the National Stadium "Vasil Levski" (Sofia) which is it's second with a capacity of 43,230 seats. Unfortunately the construction of the stadium is not done, so it is not currently in use.



## 8. Plovdiv has one of the oldest clock towers in Europe



Crowning Sahat Tepe, is this fortified clock tower which was built in the 17th century and one of the city's emblems. The Italian master of Genoa – Antonio Barbargella designed the mechanism of the clock back in 1610. The Karnobat master of clocks – Dimitar Todorov created the current clock mechanism. It's a unique reconstruction of the old one according to original drawings.

## Appendix A

### Major Countries of Origin of Foreign Students Enrolled in Bulgarian Universities in 2018-2019

Country of prior education	2018/19		
	Professional bachelor	Bachelor	Master
<b>Total</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>4,656</b>	<b>10,943</b>
Albania	4	221	66
Armenia	1	21	11
Austria	1	8	25
Belgium	1	4	17
Canada	-	11	31
China	1	80	38
Cyprus	3	70	253
Denmark	1	3	22
Egypt	2	7	16
Finland	-	-	25
France	2	35	53
Georgia	-	27	2
Germany	2	38	1,323
Greece	45	992	2,848
India	3	5	237
Iran	-	9	15
Iraq	1	13	36
Ireland	2	6	204
Israel	1	10	50
Italy	-	25	615
Japan	-	4	18
Jordan	1	1	20
Kazakhstan	16	50	38
Korea (Rep. of )	-	11	8
Kosovo	1	51	43
Kuwait	-	2	12
Lebanon	1	10	26
Libya	1	2	8

Moldova (Republic of)	3	198	78
Mongolia	-	20	2
Morocco	4	2	22
Nepal	-	-	11
Netherlands	2	19	35
Nigeria	8	102	72
North Macedonia	41	516	286
Norway	-	2	76
Pakistan	1	7	15
Palestine	-	6	14
Poland	-	15	16
Portugal	1	13	27
Russian Federation	43	165	86
Saudi Arabia	-	-	12
Serbia	53	294	142
South Africa	3	13	10
Spain	-	40	67
Sweden	-	8	219
Switzerland	-	3	16
Syrian Arab Republic	2	40	72
Turkey	32	563	695
Ukraine	116	659	237
United Arab Emirates	1	4	35
United Kingdom	-	39	2,375
United States of America	2	57	50
Viet Nam	1	25	82
Others	15	130	131

Source: Adapted from data available on the National Statistical Institute website (25.04.2019)

## **Trakia University**

### **A Short Introduction**

Trakia University ranks fifth among the universities in Bulgaria and is dedicated to providing quality education in the fields of Medicine and Healthcare, Veterinary Medicine, Agriculture, Pedagogy and Economy. It received a 9.2 point accreditation by the National Agency for Evaluation and Accreditation and currently offers courses for BA, MA, MSc, and PhD degrees in the same fields. This is the only Bulgarian university with a European accreditation for its programme in Veterinary Medicine taught also in English. The university is undergoing a process of internationalization and invites foreign students to benefit from its resources and expertise. The Medical Faculty also offers a full-time training in Medicine in English, followed by the Faculties of Agriculture, Pedagogy and Economics.

Over 8200 students from Bulgaria and the world are taught by nearly 600 highly qualified full-time, visiting and honorary international lecturers in 72 BA and MA courses and more than 70 doctoral programmes. Over 15 000 certificates for post-graduate qualification and specialization have been awarded over the years.

Trakia University has its own training facilities comprising 20 study corpora with modern lecturing and computerized halls, seminar rooms, and over 44 specialized laboratories in the relevant scientific fields. Students acquire practical skills and extramural training in the university experimental bases, hospitals, veterinary clinics, as well as farms, companies and organizations with which the university is currently cooperating.

Education and research involve modern teaching methods, including e-learning and distance learning. A recent project for distance learning in over 98 specialties has recently been implemented. A new, integrated information system for complex management of the university resources, students and faculty has been created.

The university is actively promoting international teaching and training exchange of students and faculty within the Erasmus +, Comensky, Life-long learning and other programmes. There are active research and science mobility agreements with over 60 EU institutions and universities in Asia and the US, some of which have brought to the realization of multinational projects and improvement of research production.

The University Library and the separate faculty libraries offer over 300 000 volumes of specialized literature and periodicals in Bulgarian, English, French, German, Russian and Korean. Internal and interinstitutional book exchange is available for 35 countries and 108 universities.

The university fully meets the accommodation needs of its students. There are canteens, cafeterias and recreation lounges on all campuses.

There are strong traditions in sports, such as football, basketball, volleyball, tennis, track-and-field, aerobics, martial arts, orienting, field hockey, etc. The basketball team won the A group cup for men in 2013, while the rugby team reached second place in the state competitions.

Students can join folklore dance clubs, Latin and sports dances, choirs, Trakia University band and theatre. They have local and international appearances at partner universities. The active Korean language and culture club organizes annual events dedicated to Korea at university and in town.

Student Council has a key role in educational, administrative, research, international and artistic spheres of student life. It has also initiated a number of charity, volunteering, sports and entertainment initiatives.

### **Application process**

The application process in Trakia university depends on many factors, such as the nationality of the applicants, the chosen program and language preferences. Generally, the following main categories of applicants-foreign citizens exist:

1. Applicants from EU and European Economic Area, who follow the rules and regulations applicable to Bulgarian citizens – the same terms of applying, the same deadlines and tuition fees.

2. Applicants of Bulgarian origin who apply through Bulgarian Ministry of Science according to the Regulations № 103 and 228 of Bulgarian Council of Ministers.

3. Applicants from non-EU countries – they are accepted and ranked according to the submitted documents or according to their results of the entering exams and pay higher tuition fees.

4. Dual citizenship applicants:

- 4.1. Those applicants having dual citizenship, one of which is Bulgarian and the other is from an EU member state or from EEA, shall be admitted under the terms and conditions and within the due order as for the Bulgarian

citizens (after an entrance exam in Biology and Chemistry, as for the Bulgarian candidate students).

4.2. Those applicants having dual citizenship, one of which is Bulgarian and the other is from a non-EU member state or from EEA (third country), but who have completed their secondary education in the Republic of Bulgaria, regardless of their second nationality, shall be admitted under the terms and conditions and within the due order as for the Bulgarian citizens.

4.3. Those applicants having dual citizenship, one of which is Bulgarian and the other is from a non-EU member state or from EEA (third country), who have completed their secondary education abroad, shall be admitted under the terms and conditions and within the order determined for the non-EU member state citizens (third country), so they can pay 50% of the fee for the foreign citizens.

The category in which each applicant falls, determines the application requirements and tuition fees of the foreign candidates.

For all further inquiries contact the Education Department of Trakia University, Rectorate, room 200, Students' Campus, Stara Zagora, 6000, E-mail: [academic@uni-sz.bg](mailto:academic@uni-sz.bg), Tel. +359 42 699 209

### **Information for newly admitted students**

#### **Visa**

If you are a EU citizen you are not required to apply for a visa. Currently Bulgaria issues national visas only. Those visas do not give their holders the right to enter the Schengen area.

Students from non-EU countries may need a Type D visa to enter the territory of Bulgaria.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has published the following requirements for issuing a Type D visa on their website:

#### **"Stay duration**

A long-stay visa of up to 6 months and a right to stay of up to 180 days is issued to foreigners who wish to settle for a long term or permanently in the Republic of Bulgaria (under article 15, paragraph 1 of the Foreigners in the Republic of Bulgaria Act)

A long-stay visa with a validity term of up to one year and a right to stay up to 360 days may be issued to foreigners who perform science research or are students under tuition programmes for up to one year, post-graduate or trainee students, foreigners sent on assignment by a foreign employer for the



performance of specific tasks, related to control and coordination of a tourist services contract as well as foreigners sent on assignment by a foreign employer for implementing investments under the Investment Promotion Act (under article 15, paragraph 2 of the Foreigners in the Republic of Bulgaria Act).

### **Application**

The application for issuing a long-stay visa is submitted only in the diplomatic and consular missions at the permanent place of residence of the applicant or the missions accredited in the state of the applicant's permanent residence.

Persons staying legally in a third country, different from the country of their permanent residence, may, as an exception, apply in this third country after explaining the reasons thereof and if their return to the state of permanent residence is guaranteed.

### **Requirement for an interview with the applicant**

No exception shall be made from the requirement for a personal interview when applying for a long-stay visa."

### **Documents to be presented by the applicant**

When applying for the issue of a long-stay visa the applicant shall present the following documents:

- Visa application form
- A regular foreign travel document
- Copies of the pages of the foreign travel document with the personal information and the visas laid and/or copies of the permits for stay possessed
- Recent passport-size color photograph
- Original documents and two copies thereof substantiating the application:
  - Certificate issued by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Bulgaria
  - Verification from Trakia University – Stara Zagora
  - Proof of the financial resources possessed for subsistence and accommodation.

### **Other requirements**

In order to obtain long-stay permission the person should have a home, obligatory health insurance, sufficient subsistence means, without resorting to

the social assistance system, amounting to at least the minimum monthly wage or the minimum pension according to Bulgarian law for the period of stay.

### **Initial application**

On the initial application for permission for stay the persons who are over the age of 18, with the exception of the stateless persons, shall present a previous convictions certificate issued by the state whose citizens are or by the state of their customary residence.

For more information about Visa issues and Residence permit see the information on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: [www.mfa.bg](http://www.mfa.bg) .

Non-EU citizens are required to register at Stara Zagora Migration Office within five days after their arrival to Bulgaria.

### **Residence permit cards for non-EU students**

All students from non-EU countries studying at Trakia University must apply for Residence Permit Cards (RPC) at Stara Zagora Migration Office of the National Migration Directorate before their Visa type D expires. Upon registration and approval, the students will obtain an official permission to stay and study in the country for a period of 6 or 12 months. The RPC must be renewed before its expiration date every time until the study course of the non-EU citizen ends. Failure to renew the RPC on time may result in financial sanctions or deportation.

Each student must hold a valid RPC at all times during his/her studies at UE-Varna. This permission is granted upon submission of a verification issued by UE-Varna to certify that the applicant is registered as a student at the university.

### **Required documents for residence permit:**

- Valid international passport
- Housing agreement or other evidence that the applicant has been provided with a place to live during his/her stay
- Receipt (bank or any other receipt) for paid tuition fees for the current semester
- Copy of the certificate, issued by the Ministry of Education and Science
- Certificate for Criminal Record translated in Bulgarian and legalized – submitted only once, the first time the student applies for RPC

- Bulgarian health insurance for the minimum coverage of 30 000 Euro or 60 000 Leva for the period of the validity of the RPC (6 or 12 months)

- Letter of Student Status from Trakia University confirming that the applicant is a registered student

- Bank statement for the minimum of 1500 Leva

- Application form

- Receipt for paid RPC fee - fees vary according to the validity period (6 or 12 months) and the type of service (standard, fast or express).

Note that every student is responsible for his/her residence permit card and all other personal documents.

Please, contact the Education Department Office (room 200) for assistance with the registration procedure and the required documentation.

### **Residence Certificate for EU citizens**

The grounds for issuing a residence certificate are to prove that European citizen has enrolled in a school/college/university in Bulgaria for study, including professional training, and has medical insurance and sufficient financial resources to cover his/her expenses and that of the family members without being a burden to the Bulgarian social security system.

In order to apply for a long-term residence certificate, the EU student should submit an application to the Stara Zagora Migration Office of the National Migration Directorate within three months after his/her first entry in the Republic of Bulgaria.

### **Transport to Bulgaria**

#### **Air**

There are four local airports which can be reached from any EU or neighboring country with low cost air companies (Ryanair, Wizzair): Sofia, Plovdiv, Burgas and Varna. There are regular flights from/to Sofia operated by Bulgaria Air and most European airliners, such as Lufthansa, British Airways, Air France, Air Italia, etc. If you travel from Asia, you can also rely on the services of Turkish Airlines and Qatar Airlines which often have direct flights to Istanbul or Sofia.

#### **Train**

The Bulgarian State Railways offer a regular and cheap way to travel from Sofia to Stara Zagora (~4 hrs) at a reduced price for people under 26 years of age. The railways network in Southern Bulgaria is very well maintained and is

often used by students and frequent travelers. You do not need to reserve a seat in advance, but be prepared for occasional short delays.

#### **Bus**

There are regular bus fares from the Central Coach Station in Sofia to the rest of the country. The trip may cost ~20 BGN and take up to 2 ½ -3 hours. Buses are usually full and you need to reserve a place in advance or buy a ticket a couple of hours earlier.

#### **Currency**

Bulgarian currency is called “Lev/ Leva” which equals 100 stotinki. 1 EUR = 1.96 leva (BGN). Bulgaria is currently expecting to join the Shengen Area and adopt the Euro as its official currency. Payments in Euro are generally (and unofficially) accepted in some tourist towns and at airports.

### **Welcome to Trakia University!**

#### **General Information**

The academic year is divided into two semesters – winter and summer, which last for 15 weeks each and are succeeded by exam sessions. The winter semester usually begins during the third week of September and ends right before Christmas. Students then have time to prepare for exams and sit them after around 8 January until the third week of February. The summer semester starts on the following Monday and finished at the end of May, followed by exam sessions until July.

The exam sessions are regular and resit within the same month, and if necessary, students can opt for early September sessions, or ‘liquidating’ exams, if necessary. Individual resits can also be arranged with the permission of the Dean, and the department head.

The curriculum for the respective specialty includes mandatory, elective and facultative courses relevant to the specialty. The list of subjects and the credit hours requirements for each year are available online. Lectures and practicals on a certain subject are usually held once a week and students ought to respect the deadlines for handing in projects, papers or assignments. Late turning can be excused in exceptional cases if allowed by the faculty member.

Lecturers will generally deliver their presentations in either Bulgarian or English and often will provide the content in electronic format on Moodle. E-learning is gaining more and more popularity and students are encouraged to explore online resources in the library or at home. You are not required to attend all lectures, but you must be present at practicals where you will be

trained to use equipment and preparations (for medicine and veterinary medicine) and get a hands-on experience. A main advantage of Bulgarian medical schools is that there are cadavers available for study in the pathology and PM rooms, in the anatomy halls or clinics.

You must wear scrubs or a lab coat and clogs during practicals or during traineeships in the clinics. When you visit farms, bring overalls and Wellington boots.

### **Locating rooms and lecture halls**

Fresher's week can be exciting, however, getting to know the university infrastructure could be quite challenging at first. Rooms have three-digit numbers in most buildings and you could locate the floor by considering the first digit as a guide. Basic knowledge of Bulgarian can help if you can't find the room or the hall right away.

The Faculty of Medicine, the Medical College and the Faculty of Education are located in number 9—11 Armejska Street near the UMPHAT "Prof. Dr. Stoyan Kirkovich" in Stara Zagora, while the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, the Faculty of Agriculture, and the Faculty of Economics are outside town on the main University Campus. You can use bus 20 to reach the buildings from town.

### **Administration offices**

Each faculty has administration offices responsible for local and international students. The coordinating Education Department (Student Affairs) Office responsible for admissions, accommodation and student affairs is located in room 200 in the main university building (Rectorate) next to the western entrance (Ms Stefka Mihova, email: [academic@uni-sz.bg](mailto:academic@uni-sz.bg), tel. +359 42 699 209).

The Student Affairs Offices at the respective faculties can be reached at:

Faculty of Medicine

Ms Milka Tsvyatкова (11 Armejska Street, fl. 1, room 4, tel. 664 204, e-mail: [academ@mf.uni-sz.bg](mailto:academ@mf.uni-sz.bg))

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine

Ms Nadya Koleva (University Campus, email: [nkoleva@uni-sz.bg](mailto:nkoleva@uni-sz.bg), tel: 042/699 504)

Faculty of Agriculture

Ms Danilina Uchkova (University Campus, room 408, tel. 042 699 304, 0885 316 620, e-mail [uchkova@uni-sz.bg](mailto:uchkova@uni-sz.bg))

Faculty of Economics

Ms Stela Stefanova (University Campus, 042 699 405)

Faculty of Education

Ms Galina Kyuchukova (9 Armejska Street, tel. 042 /640 846; 613 764; 613 762; 613 763)

The Student Affairs Offices will provide you with information on the academic calendar, schedules, curricula and examination sessions, as well as with forms for current student status needed for issuing student cards for public transport and other services.

All requests for accommodation in dormitories, scholarships and tuition fees are processed by the coordinating Student Affairs Office, room 200, University Campus, near the western entrance.

### **Libraries**

The Central University Library is located in a separate building in the south end of the University campus. It has a small collection of books and periodicals in English and access to e-books and databases from the computers in the university network. You can register and use the resources on site or borrow books for a semester-long home reading. You can access the electronic catalogues on the university homepage and also order a search (title, authors, or key words) or ask a librarian to find a resource either in the university library network, or deliver it through an interinstitutional book loan programme. The library also offers scanning and copying services at a small price.

There are other faculty libraries in town, such as the Pedagogical Faculty Library, Medical Library, Medical College Library, and various information hubs. The working hours are from 8:30 to 16:30 Monday to Friday, except for national and bank holidays.

The Regional Library “Zharij Knyazheski” is also accessible for reading and borrowing books. You can register for an annual fee of 5 BGN and use their resources in English as well. The library is also a cultural centre, hosting events, such as concerts, book readings, lectures, theatre performances, and exhibitions. Check out their website for further information: [www.libsz.org](http://www.libsz.org).

### **Dormitories**

Most Bulgarian students apply for a place in a hostel (dormitory) on campus. Foreign students are also eligible for hostel accommodation. The low cost of rent and the living expenses make this option very affordable. There

are several hostels – on the main University Campus (Students' Town), near Artilerijski Park, on the campus of the Medical Faculty, and the Pedagogical Faculty. Students staying at the hostels must abide by the rules of communal living, otherwise they may be expelled from the hostel, or the university. All application documents must be submitted to the Education Department (Student Affairs Office), room 200 in the Rectorate Building on the main University Campus.

Other options include private accommodation in town, Penev Hostels for long-term stays, and Airbnb. You can use the services of a real estate agency online, search landlords in person (be careful with the contracts!), or ask senior students about possible options and advice. The average rent per month is between 300-600 BGN plus living costs.

### **Student Life**

Veterinary and medical students are required to purchase lab coats, scrubs, clogs or sterile shoes, wellington boots, and basic instruments, such as scalpels, blades, stethoscopes and thermometers to use on the farm, during practicals, and visits to clinics and hospitals. You can find the equipment online, in certain shops in town or from older students in the same field.

#### **At the Farm**

There are several farms in the nearby villages which are open to vet students and regular trips with the university bus allow you to get a first-hand experience with small and large ruminants, horses, chicken and pigs. You will be accompanied by a faculty member and keepers while you are on the farm.

#### **At the Hospital**

There is one teaching hospital for medical students in town: the Multi-profile Hospital for Active Treatment “Prof. Dr. Stoyan Kirkovitch” which is next to the Medical Faculty Campus. Students can also arrange to assist and get trained in other hospitals in town with the permission of the respective Dean.

The Small and Large Animal Clinic on main campus is where most students get their first experience treating and examining animals. Internships and traineeships are available for students from year 4+. Students are strongly advised to do their 2 month summer traineeships in other clinics in Bulgaria , or abroad, most often on an Erasmus exchange.

### **Part-time Jobs and Career Centres**

There is a Career Centre in every faculty which posts job offers and part-time employment notices. Opportunities for internships and paid traineeships are also posted on the university website and facebook page.

You can also browse the local media webpages and facebook groups where local people search for hired help. Sites such as [www.jobs.bg](http://www.jobs.bg), and the National Employment Agency <https://www.az.government.bg/bg/ejobs/> can be a good start. Job fairs are organized annually to recruit students and recent graduates.

### **Volunteering organizations**

If you are interested in volunteering work, make sure you visit Green Balkans Wildlife Refuge Centre in the South-East part of town where vets and volunteers have established a centre for rehabilitation and care for wild birds. You can visit them every day of the week. Start by exploring their website: [www.greenbalkans.org](http://www.greenbalkans.org).

Royal Canin attracts volunteers and student ambassadors for their initiatives both in and outside Bulgaria. There are also many other animal rights groups and environmental organizations most of which hold annual meetings and perform activities for planting trees, cleaning mountains and protecting wildlife.

The European Youth Portal is a good place to start your search for any type of volunteering or on-the-job training: [https://europa.eu/youth/volunteering/organisations\\_en](https://europa.eu/youth/volunteering/organisations_en)

Local organizations, such as Time Heroes (<https://timeheroes.org/bg/>) and CVS also offer opportunities to join camps and travel around the country.

### **Public transport in Stara Zagora**

There is a regular bus line to the Rectorate building of Trakia University. Take buses 20 or 204 and get off at the last stop. Students are eligible for a reduced bus fare and can apply for a student card at the bus offices in town. The card costs 30 BGN for 3 months. The regular bus ticket costs 1 BGN per ride and is collected by inspectors inside the bus.

The trolley and bus schedules for all city and regional lines are available on [www.starazagora.bg](http://www.starazagora.bg).

There are bicycle lanes, and a lane connecting the university to downtown is envisioned for construction.

You may consider calling a taxi at 042/ 6123 (Char taxi), or 042/ 6106 (N taxi) if you need a ride in Stara Zagora.



If you are a driver, you can rent a car from Zagora Rent-a-car (042 625 599) or another agency in town. If you are in Sofia and wish to explore Bulgaria for a week, go online and contact an agency that may provide good conditions.

### **Postal services**

Bulgarian posts are the national service for delivery of letters and parcels locally and internationally. They offer regular, fast, registered, priority, air mail, and courier services (Bulpost) at a small price. Depending on the service and destination, your international order will usually arrive within two weeks. There is also a post office inside the Rectorate building where you can send and receive letters, make a money order, and pay your communal bills.

There are also several major courier companies in town, such as Econt, Speedy, Intelogistica, DHL, M&BM Express (with Austrian Posts), In Time, etc. Each of them has a respective website translated in English.

### **Translation and Interpreting**

There are numerous agencies in Stara Zagora which can provide translation and interpretation services, legalization and certification of diplomas and other documents from/into Bulgarian. The prices range from 13 to 25 BGN per page. Legalization services vary and are subject to the particular Consular Office and type of document. There are regular (3 days +), fast (the next day) and express (in a matter of hours) services. Some of the agencies in town include Nov Vek, Prevodachi.eu, Rosita Vasilevi, and many, many others accessible online.

### **Healthcare and Health Insurance**

\*For emergencies, please call 112.

Foreign students are self-insured. A general health insurance valid for Bulgaria is a requirement for registration for each semester at the University. Students have to sign up for a medical insurance either for a year (covering the period of the academic year) or for the whole period of training at the University. If the Health Insurance is signed in a foreign country it is required upon enrolment at the University the student to submit an official translation of the signed Health Insurance in Bulgarian language. EU citizens submit a copy of their EHIC (European Health Insurance Card).

European Health Insurance Card: According to the European Union law, citizens from EU and EEA countries are subjects of free medical care in emergency cases, provided they have a valid European Health Insurance Card

(EHIC) at hand. Make sure to bring this card if you are EU citizen upon your arrival to Bulgaria, because you will need it when you go to see a doctor.

For additional information on insurance coverage please visit <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=559&langId=en> .

Please note that: A valid health insurance for the territory of Bulgaria and the period of training is mandatory for registration at the local migration office as well as for the academic year!

You can receive primary medical care at one of the clinics or medical centres in town. A list of medical centres and hospitals in Stara Zagora is available at: <http://www.zdravnaposhta.net/post/index.php/meditzinski-tzentrove/1797-oblast-stara-zagora/stara-zagora>

\*Dr. Atanas Slavov, MD is a General Practitioner with good command of English who works at Galen Medical Centre, 41 Tsar Ivan Shishman Street, Stara Zagora 6000, tel.: 042 622 092.

### **Banks and Exchange Bureaus**

Personal bank accounts in EUR, BGN or USD can be made in most banks in town, some of which are international and have local branches. Each bank will charge you a service fee of about 2 BGN per month, and additional 2-4 BGN for a bank transfer between banks in Bulgaria. The processing fee for foreign transfer is up to 50 BGN. Most banks have savings plans and can issue a debit card for ATMs and credit card payments. You can also pay your bills for communal services – electricity, gas, and water – at most banks or online as well. Online and mobile banking is becoming more and more popular, and you can manage your accounts at any time anywhere.

Exchange bureaus will be the easiest way to buy or sell small amounts of currency with none or a very low commission. Their currency rates usually differ very little from the official rates of the Bulgarian National Bank. Most exchange bureaus work with European, North American, and some Asian currencies.

### **Pet Care**

If you are a pet owner or wish to adopt a small animal, you should register it, and go to a vet clinic for vaccination and neutering. Be careful with you landlords or dormitory regulations, because animals are usually not allowed on the property.

The Small Animal Clinic at the university is open around the clock and you can rely on the teaching and student staff for accurate and professional

advice. There are also other private vet clinics in town, where you can do your extramural training if you are a vet student.

If you need a pet hotel, there are a few, such as Small Pet Food and Cat Hotel on 55 Podpolkovnik Kalitin Street, tel. 0899 58 69 69, e-mail: [ganetsia@abv.bg](mailto:ganetsia@abv.bg). The night stay costs about 7-10 BGN and you can bring toys and special food, if your pet requires such.

### **Shopping**

When you shop for food it is still better to try the open markets and small shops for fresh vegetables and fruit. Local farmers also sell their produce at the Central Market in town every day. Supermarkets, such as Kaufland and Billa offer various discounts, and are accessible both on foot and by bus.

Fashion and jewelry items vary in price and some may be found at a cheaper price in Plovdiv, or Edirne, where most Bulgarians travel for pleasure and are attracted by the low prices. There are two shopping malls in town and a main street full of colorful display of seasonal attire and shoes. Some of the shops to buy scrubs and nursing shoes are Tiki, Bultex99, Feya and Viking T all located downtown.

There are several book shops offering a selection of books in English – Helikon, Book Point, and Ciela. The latter is found in Park Mall and has the largest collection of books. Ordering online is strongly recommended, and your purchase will arrive the next day for national and up to a month for international orders.

### **Photocopying**

Copying and scanning are available inside or near the main buildings of the university (on all campuses). Their services are relatively affordable, as prices range from 6 to 10 stotinki per page. Shops also offer monochrome and color printing, binding and lamination. Even though copyright regulations advise against photocopying textbooks, it is common practice to do so if they are currently out of print or unavailable in libraries.

### **Mobile phone, Internet and cable TV**

Once you have arrived in Bulgaria, it is a good idea to get a package of mobile phone, Internet and cable TV services from any of the providers. They have different plans and offer regular discounts. Search online for A1, Vivacom, Telenor, etc. for mobile services, or any of the local branches of Bulsatcom, Trakia Cable, etc. for cable TV and Internet. You can also visit any of their shops in town, call their toll-free numbers (they speak English!), or search their websites for further information.

A large number of PC repair and maintenance shops are available in town, such as Most Computers, PC Service, etc., which can be found online as well.

### **Cafés, clubs and meeting points**

Feel free to explore Stara Zagora by day and by night by visiting cafés, slow and fast food restaurants, sandwich bars and night clubs. A favorite meeting point for locals is “Gabata” (literally the ‘mushroom’, which is a corner spot near the Central Park and the Municipality), “Chasovnika” (the ‘clock’ – next to the City Department Store), or simply Drums – an Irish pub, favorite of many expats and local beer drinkers. A full list of the clubs and venues, as well as weekly events, is available in English at [www.programata.bg](http://www.programata.bg). Make sure you try the local beer “Zagorka” and some of the wonderful wines from the region.

There is also a café where the owners speak excellent Greek and where you can meet up with other students from town – G&D café.

### **Tourism**

The region of Stara Zagora is conveniently located in the Thracian valley where some of the oldest European dwellings have been found. A long history spanning over 8 millennia embraces the inhabitants with legendary and often tragic events as well as high cultural achievements. The phoenix is a symbol of the city which had been destroyed by fire three times and each time it rose from the ashes. Another of its symbols is a lioness with cubs found on an antique carved stone which can be seen in the Regional Museum of History in town.

The Antique Forum of Augusta Trayana is located in the very centre of town, and presents a semicircular square surrounded by amphitheatrical stone seats. In summer it serves as an open-air concert and opera venue. The stone street which starts from the forum reaches the Regional Museum of History where a lot of permanent and temporary exhibitions are displayed with guided tours in English as well.

Near the Antique Forum is the City Art Gallery with more than 4,600 works of art by local artists and classical painters such as Vladimir Dimitrov-the Master, Dechko Uzunov, Stoyan Velevev and others.

The Geo Milev Theatre is a drama theatre company with well-established traditions in town. They have a larger and a chamber hall and stage at least five new plays each season. The company invites directors and actors from other theatres in the country and host festivals such as the Festival of

Francophone School Theatre with a large international participation, and the International Puppet Theatre Festival in cooperation with the Puppet Theatre in town.

The State Opera is the first opera house outside Sofia and has always been symbolic for the efforts of local citizens to enjoy a vibrant musical and artistic life. The Festival of Opera and Ballet Arts is an annual event, attracting some of the best Bulgarian musicians and singers to perform here. The ballet company is international and has an impressive repertoire of classical and modern choreography. The opera works closely with European and Asian directors and performers, as well as with world-famous Bulgarian singers, such as Ms. Vesselina Katsarova, who was also born in Stara Zagora and takes an active role in promoting and supporting Bulgarian classical music, singers, and musicians.

Other festivals annually held in Stara Zagora include: International Film Festival “The Golden Linden”, Jazz Forum, Summer Musical Evenings, Wine Festival “Augustiada”, and many other youth events, some of which organized by university students.

For more details on the history and cultural life of Stara Zagora, visit [www.starazagora.love/en](http://www.starazagora.love/en) .

## **Appendix B**

### **ESSENTIAL BULGARIAN PHRASES**

#### **At the Immigration Office**

Как се казвате? What is your name?

Аз се казвам... My name is...

Откъде сте? Where are you from?

- Аз съм от Гърция/ Турция/ Великобритания/ Германия/ Холандия/ Кипър. I am from Greece/ Turkey/ UK/ Germany/ the Netherlands/ Cyprus.

- Аз съм от Индия. Бих искала да кандидатствам за виза Д/ разрешително за пребиваване. I am from India. I would like to apply for a Type D visa/ residence permit.

Имате ли лична карта или паспорт? Please show me your ID card or passport.

Къде живеете в момента? Where do you live now?

Живея в Пловдив/ Стара Загора. Адресът ми е... I live in Plovdiv/ Stara Zagora. My address is...

На колко години сте? How old are you?

На 20 години. I am 20 years old.

Говорите ли български език? Do you speak Bulgarian?

Да, говоря много добре. /Говоря малко. Yes, very well./ I speak a little.

Какво следвате? What do you study?

Следвам хуманна медицина/ дентална медицина/ ветеринарна медицина/ фармация.

I study medicine/ dentistry/ veterinary medicine/ pharmacy.

Направихте ли си здравна застраховка? Do you have a health insurance?

#### **At the university**

Ректор, Декан, професор, доцент, главен асистент, асистент

Rector, Dean, Professor, Associate Professor, Chief Assistant, Assistant

Администрация Administration

Учебен отдел Educational Department (Student Affairs Office)

Библиотека Library

Факултет Faculty

Катедра Department

Клиника Clinic/ Medical Centre

Болница Hospital

Извинете, къде е стая номер 200? Excuse me, could you tell me where room 200 is?

Къде се намира лекционната зала? Where is the lecture hall, please?

Къде е копирният център? Where is the copy centre, please?

Моля, помогнете ми да намеря библиотеката/ лабораторията/ залата по анатомия/ езиковите кабинети/ клиниките/ столовата/ тоалетната.

Please, help me find the library/ laboratory/ anatomy hall/ language rooms/ clinics/ canteen/ toilets.

### **Accommodation**

Живея сам/ със съквартирант(и).

I live alone/ I've got a roommate(s)

Живея на квартира/ на общежитие.

I rent a room/ I live in a dorm.

Наех апартамент под наем близо до университета/ в центъра. Има кухня, спалня и хол.

I've rented an apartment near the campus/ centre. It has a kitchen, a bedroom and a living room.

Подписах договор с хазяин/ хазяйка за една година.

I have signed a contract with the landlord/ landlady for one year.

Наемът ме устройва.

The rent suits me.

Наемът не ме устройва – много е висок.

The rent does not suit me. It is too high.

Ще плащам лично разходите за ток, вода и парно отопление.

I will pay the costs for electricity, water and gas myself.

### **Directions**

Извинете, има ли наблизо...

Excuse me, is there... near here?

- банка, аптека, поликлиника, поща, хранителен магазин, кафене, добър ресторант

- bank, pharmacy, medical centre, post office, supermarket, café, a good restaurant

Продължете направо, завийте наляво/надясно, върнете се назад, тръгнете по втората пряка

Go straight, turn left/right, go back, take the second road

Как да стигна до университета?

How can I get to the university campus?

Тръгнете направо по бул. „Руски“ и след 20 минути ще сте пред Университета.

Walk straight Rousski boulevard and in twenty minutes you will be at the main gate.

Вземете автобус 20 и слезте на последната спирка.

Take bus 20 and get off at the last stop.

### **Rent-a-car**

Искате ли да наемете кола? – Да, за три дни.

Would you like to rent a car? – Yes, for three days.

Кога ще вземете колата?- Във вторник сутринта.

When are you going to pick it up? – On Tuesday morning.

*\*Понеделник, вторник, сряда, четвъртък, петък, събота, неделя, уикенд*

*Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, weekend*

*\*\*Сутрин, обед, следобед, вечер: morning, at noon, afternoon, evening*

Имате ли шофьорска книжка?- Да, имам.

Have you got a driver's license? – Yes, I have.

Личната карта или паспорта, моля!

Please let me see your ID card or passport!

Мога ли да платя в брой, с карта, с чек?

Can I pay in cash, by card, by cheque?



### **At the Weekend**

Какво ще правиш през уикенда/ ваканцията? What are you going to do over the weekend/ during the holidays?

- ще пътувам до Пампорово/ I will travel to Pamporovo.
- ще ходя на море/ I will go to the seaside.
- ще карам ски/ I will go skiing.
- ще се срещна с приятели/ I will meet some friends.
- ще се прибера при семейството си/ I will go back to my family.
- ще си почивам/ I will relax.

### **At the airport**

Летище, airport

Полет, flight

Излитане, departure

Пристигане, arrival

Закъснение, delay

Проверка на багаж, luggage control

Чекиране, check-in

Изход, gate

В колко часа е полетът Ви? When does your flight leave?

Излитам в 15:45 ч. Трябва да съм на летището 2 часа по-рано.

I leave at 15:45. I must be at the airport two hours earlier.

Кога пристигате в Англия? When do you arrive in the UK?

В 18:35 часа. Има 2 часа разлика. At 18:35. There's a two hours difference.

Какво е времето днес?.

What is the weather like today?

Днес е слънчево, сухо, мъгливо, хладно, облачно, дъждовно, вали  
сняг

Today is sunny, dry, foggy, chilly, cloudy, rainy; it snows

## **At the Restaurant**

Здравейте! Добре дошли!

Welcome!

Имате ли меню на английски език? – Да/ Не, съжалявам.

Have you got an English menu? – Yes/ No, I'm sorry.

Какво ще поръчате?

May I take your order?

Бих искал, I would like:

- от това ястие...this meal
- шопска/ зелена/ зелева салата – Shopska/ green/ cabbage salad
- гъбена/ телешка супа/ таратор – mushroom/ veal soup/ tarator
- ризото със зеленчуци/ месо с картофи/риба – risotto/ meat and potatoes/ fish
- сладолед/ торта – ice-cream/ tarte
- вино/ бира/ ракия – wine/ beer/ rakia

Имате ли безмесни ястия? Вегетарианец/ вегетарианка съм.

Have you got any vegetarian meals? I am a vegetarian.

Моля, донесете ми бутилка минерална вода/ газирана вода.

Please bring me a bottle of mineral water/ fizzy water.

Донесете ми сметката, моля!

May I have the bill please?

Запазете рестото като бакшиш.

Keep the rest.

## **Shopping**

Къде мога да си купя пресни плодове и зеленчуци?

Where can I buy fresh fruit and vegetables?

Наблизо има малък супермаркет.

There is a small supermarket near here.

Четвъртък пазар е нагоре по тази улица.

Chetvartak Pazar is up the street.

Аз предпочитам да се храня на стол или си купувам готова храна за вкъщи.

I usually eat in the canteen or buy warm meals from a self-served bistrot nearby.

Къде да си купя медицинско облекло?

Where can I buy any scrubs?

Има няколко магазина за работно облекло в центъра на града.

There are several shops for working clothes downtown.

Здравейте! Трябват ми дрехи за медицинско лице.

Hello! I need a pair of scrubs.

Какъв размер носите? – Аз съм / нося размер S /M /L /XL.

What size are you? – I am S/M/L/XL.

Какъв цвят предпочитате? – Предпочитам бял /син/ зелен/лилав

What colour do you prefer? – I prefer white/ blue/ green/ purple.

Къде мога да ги премеря? – Съблекалнята е ето там.

Where can I try them on? – The fitting room is over there.

### **At the GP's Surgery**

Как се чувствате? Какъв е проблемът?

How are you feeling? What has brought you here?

Чувствам се отпаднал и с висока температура.

I feel weak and feverish.

Откога са оплакванията?

How long has this been going on?

От една седмица. / От два дни.

For a week./ For two days.

Взимате ли някакви лекарства?

Are you taking any medications?

Не вземам никакви лекарства.

I'm not on any medications at the moment.

Вземам само парацетамол / аналгин / болкоуспокояващи.

I take only paracetamol/ analgin/ analgesics.

Боли ли Ви гърлото? Кашляте ли?

Does your throat hurt? Are you coughing?

Да, имам остра/ дразнеща/ дълбока/ продуктивна кашлица.

Yes, I have an acute/ scratching/ deep/productive cough.

Имате ли хрема?- Да, имам. / Не, нямам.

Do you have a runny nose? – Yes, I do/ No, I don't.

Ще Ви прегледам. Седнете на кушетката. Отворете уста. Трябва да преслушам белите дробове и сърцето. Съблечете си ризата. Дишайте! Кашляйте! Облечете се!

Let me take a look. Please sit on the exam table. Open your mouth. I have to listen to your lungs and heart. Take your shirt off. Breathe! Cough! Put your shirt on!

Температурата Ви е висока. Сезонен грип. Ще Ви напиша рецепта за .... Отидете да си почивате вкъщи.

You are running a high fever. It's the seasonal flu. I will write a prescription for... Go and rest at home.

Колко струва прегледът? – Ако имате здравна застраховка, не ми дължите нищо.

How much does the examination cost? – If you have a health insurance, you don't owe me anything.

Какво Ви боли? Where does it hurt?

Боли ме главата / коремът / ръката / пръстът. Болят ме краката / очите / ушите / ръцете / коленете / ходилата / пръстите / зъбите.

My head/ abdomen/ arm/ finger hurts. My legs/ eyes/ ears/hands/ knees/ feet/ toes/ teeth hurt.

### **At the Pet Hotel**

Имате ли си домашен любимец?

Have you got a pet?

Да, имам котка. Бих искала да я оставя във вашия хотел за една седмица, докато пътувам извън града.

Yes, I've got a cat. I would like to leave it at your hotel for a week while I am travelling outside town.

Елате да Ви покажа помещенията. Харесват ли Ви?

Let me show you the rooms. Do you like them?

Да, добре са. Колко струва нощувката и храната?

Yes, they are good. How much does the boarding cost?

Седем лева на вечер плюс още пет лева за храна – 12 лева. Устройва ли Ви?

7 Leva per night plus five leva for food. Does that sound OK?

Котката кастрирана ли е? Обезпаразитена ли е? Ваксинирана ли е?

Is the cat neutered/ spayed? Is it current on its parasite prevention? Is it vaccinated?

Регистрирана ли е? Трябва да видя паспорта ѝ.

Is it registered? May I see its passport?

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