

# STUDENTS NEWSLETTER

# FORTHEM



**forthem.**

Fostering Outreach  
within European Regions,  
Transnational Higher Education  
and Mobility



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## Values of a multicultural Europe

FORTHEM is united by a shared vision on Europe, the educational mission of European universities and a strong belief in its multiculturalism and multilingualism. FORTHEM Alliance offers students new possibilities to get international experience during their studies. To find out more about your opportunities and activities offered by FORTHEM, as well as to follow FORTHEM information and news, read the FORTHEM Student newsletter.

[Read more, get interested and apply!](#)



## FORTHEM Virtual Exchange: Students' Perspectives



### WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE

#### Virtual Exchange: Students' Perspectives

Organised by the Arqus European University Alliance and hosted by Vilnius University from 3 to 7 May 2021, the first Arqus Academy Week (2021) featured many interesting discussions, lectures, workshops and other events.

Bearing the motto “shaping the university of the future”, this debut has successfully engaged the communities of the seven universities in a discussion of a renewed vision for higher education.

During an interactive panel, specific examples of how virtual exchange has been used by European University Alliances and global networks to offer both students and staff international and intercultural collaborative learning experiences were presented. Particular attention was paid to the approach to multilingualism and its application as a resource in virtual exchanges; in addition, concrete proposals for Virtual Exchanges that Arqus members could join were made.

As FORTHEM has been active in cross-alliance idea exchange, our alliance had been invited to present some of our practices. Students from the universities of Jyväskylä and València co-presented a keynote presentation with Tamás Péter Szabó, Scientific Manager for Lab Actions, and shared their experiences of working in FORTHEM.



**Laura Castañe Bassa (JYU)** talked about her experience in a Shared Tutored Project hosted by the University of València; its aim was to explore new possibilities, combining teaching, learning, and research. Laura emphasised that the most valuable aspects of this project were the shared experiences, as well as the provided peer-feedback on their work. In addition, she also noted that there had been individual feedback sessions in which she had received personalised feedback from the tutor. Laura stated that, in addition to the feedback sessions, other FORTHEM universities organised various informative and practical sessions,

which had proved to be very helpful for the structure and draft of her personal project. Overall, Laura found that the Shared Tutored project had provided her a great opportunity to learn from peers and the tutor, as well as improve her research study.

**Thiago Craig (UV)** talked about his experience in FORTHEM Alliance's Multilingualism in School and Higher Education Lab. Thiago noted that students, be they Bachelor's, Master's or PhD, can carry out academic work while participating in the development of certain outputs. Together with two Bachelor's students and one PhD student, he contributed to writing a chapter for an academic manual concerning multimodality in academic genres; now, Thiago participates in the development of the Multilingual Learning Environments course for FORTHEM's Digital Academy. He claimed that such an approach allows students to take part in a mobility that not only has a cultural dimension in terms of different nations involved, but also covers the specific working and social practices of an international academic sphere. Thiago concluded that the overall experience was very successful, personally enriching, and highly valuable, particularly for under-graduate students.

## FORTHEM Virtual Exchange: Students' Perspectives



### WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE

#### Virtual Exchange: Students' Perspectives

**Wena Ho (JYU)** shared her experience of being part of the multilingual learning environment course development team. Despite being an outlier in the field of multilingualism, Wena was able to integrate her passion and experience in the arts to contribute to the course development in a safe and collaborative environment. Currently, the team is developing study materials covering multiple topics; Wena is responsible for the materials regarding museum learning. Together with a PhD researcher, Wena also contributed to the Creative Learning Lab, a platform for experimenting with creative learning approaches within the FORTHEM initiative, by hosting a series of virtual interactive sessions on art and well-being. Wena sees FORTHEM as a growing community where teachers and students come together to exchange, learn and innovate.

#### Video recording:

#### "FORTHEM Virtual Exchange: Students' Perspectives"



## The first FORTHEM Campus

The first FORTHEM Campus event “Foods and Fooding” is going to be launched this September in Dijon, and it is organized by the University of Burgundy.

This exciting one term study programme aims at bringing together students from the partner universities of Riga, Mainz, Jyväskylä, Valencia, Palermo and Opole with different academical backgrounds; it consists of three modules. The disciplinary module corresponds to the discipline or field the students focus on at their university, for example, biology, philosophy, business, computer sciences etc. The courses offered at University of Burgundy are either in French or in English and are adapted to the specifics of the programme. The transversal module consists of courses and activities directly linked to the topic “Foods and Fooding”,

organised especially for the students of the FORTHEM Campus. These activities are also going to be transdisciplinary; they were developed specifically for the students of the FORTHEM Campus. Finally, the open module is, by definition, open, and the students are going to be able to choose among several activities in coordination with their home university and with the programme coordinators; an internship, a term paper, an industrial tutored project, language courses, sport activities are all part of this module.



In addition to these modules, the FORTHEM Campus students are going to participate in some get-together and intercultural activities in order to build the first FORTHEM Campus community and promote the identity of the programme.

Applications are open until 30 June. Students who wish to participate may contact their local FORTHEM office:

Johannes-Gutenberg Universität Mainz: [forthem@uni-mainz.de](mailto:forthem@uni-mainz.de)

Jyväskylän yliopisto: [forthem@jyu.fi](mailto:forthem@jyu.fi)

Latvijas Universitāte: [forthem@lu.lv](mailto:forthem@lu.lv)

Università degli Studi di Palermo: [forthem.office@unipa.it](mailto:forthem.office@unipa.it)

Universitat de València: [forthem@uv.es](mailto:forthem@uv.es)

Uniwersytet Opolski: [forthem@uni.opole.pl](mailto:forthem@uni.opole.pl)

They can also directly contact the FORTHEM office in Dijon to find out more about the FORTHEM Campus by writing to [campus-forthem@u-bourgogne.fr](mailto:campus-forthem@u-bourgogne.fr), or visit [our website](#).

## FORTHEM Short term mobility

### Methodology for Studies: Summer School

From 17 to 21 May 2021, students from seven FORTHEM partner universities were given the opportunity to find out more about the methodology of epidemiological / psychological research, especially on the topics of quality of life and resilience.

During the summer school, the students had the chance to cooperate with Lilian Tzivian and Signe Mežinska, professors at the University of Latvia, and Raffael Kalish, professor at the University of Mainz.

The students regarded the event a success, as it was generally very informative, well-coordinated and structured. They also noted that it was a dynamic event, even though it took place online. The fact that the professors asked questions, encouraged everyone to participate and provided many practical examples was highly appreciated. The students also expressed interest in participating in future activities organised by FORTHEM, inspiring hope that maybe they will have a chance to meet in person and exchange contacts next time.



## Third Call for Projects

FORTHEM Alliance is happy to announce that it has chosen the participants for the third call of short-term mobility projects.

There were a total of 8 new collective mobilities which students could choose from this time. Overall, FORTHEM received over 200 applications for different projects.



Normally, local programme organisers have 35 available spots; however, this time FORTHEM made the exceptional decision to allow them more flexibility by creating vacancies for more students, if they wish. Participants have been notified of their acceptance and have the option to potentially join up to 3 different mobilities: 1 individual and 2 collective. FORTHEM continues to find ways in which it can best serve the flexibility of its members in order to ensure that they continue to receive opportunities to

to interact with other partner countries.

During the third call for projects, some collective mobilities opted for a hybrid form; thus, the students will be able to attend them both online and in person, while other mobilities remain strictly in person. Although the uncertainty of Covid-19 is still impacting mobilities, FORTHEM Alliance continues to look to the future, giving students numerous opportunities to participate in exchange activities with all of our alliance partners.



## First Instagram Photo Challenge

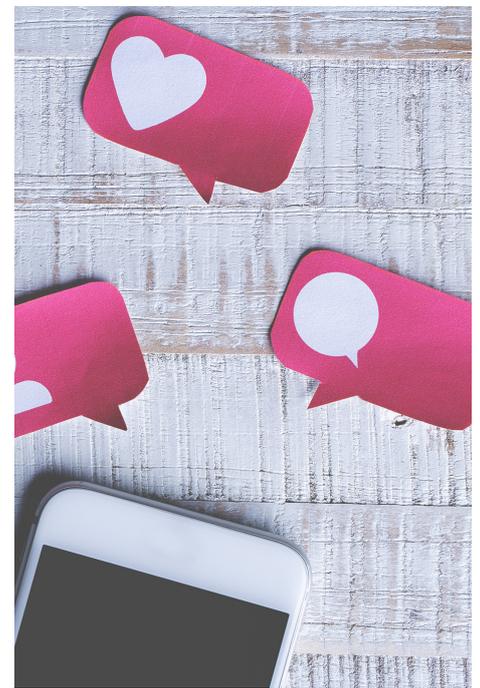
Nothing is quite as beautiful as nature in May, when everything is flourishing and blooming! That's why the FORTHEM Instagram account ran a photo challenge throughout May, during which students and participants could share photos taken in different countries all over the world and win prizes.

The participants of the photo challenge included a number of Instagram users from nearly every FORTHEM university and city. Instagram participants of the photo challenge had a chance to discover what the most beautiful month of spring looks like in different parts of the world. Students from nearly every FORTHEM university shared the best moments, tagging the FORTHEM account in the photo, thus reaching a larger audience. Along with the photo challenge on FORTHEM Instagram and Facebook accounts,

the event "May at my University" took place; during this event, representatives of all FORTHEM universities shared fascinating and useful information about events and processes taking place in their respective universities in May.



On the last day of May, all the results of the photo challenge were summarised and three winners were announced - **Silvia Godoy Tirado** from Spain, **Rabia Atsay** from Poland and **Ahee Kim** from Jyväskylä, Each FORTHEM university awarded the winners prizes that would come in handy during summer, leisure activities, and session. Congratulations to the winners and good luck to future participants!



**Silvia Godoy Tirado**



**Rabia Atsay**



**Ahee Kim**



## Interview Louis Prudent (French student from uB)

**When, where and for how long did your mobility last? Was it your first time abroad?**

"I did my internship in Valencia, Spain, in January and February 2021 (for my first year of master). It wasn't my first experience abroad. I've been to Galway, Ireland too, to do an internship for my DUT."

**Why did you choose that particular internship? Did you integrate well? How was it?**

"I contacted FORTHEM when I was searching for an internship, and I specified in my cover letter that I wanted to do an internship in molecular biology which is an area that I am passionate about. I didn't have any preference concerning the country of destination, I just wanted to improve my level of English. I knew that usually with exchange students, research laboratories work in English, no matter which country you are in.



I also wanted to live in another country for a while and discover new things, all the while knowing that this experience would be a good asset in my resume. I integrated quite well in the laboratory, everyone was welcoming and nice, and I assume that it is the case for most partners coming from Dijon. They are used to working with exchange students, and also, those research laboratories usually have a high number of students there."

**What reasons would you give to students to go do an internship abroad? What have you learned from that experience?**

"I think that if a student wants to improve his English, meet new people, extend his network and add some skills on his resume, he should definitely go for it! It is really a beautiful social,

professional and cultural experience! I am aware that it can be scary to go abroad alone, and seems difficult at first. Also I know that not everyone wants to go abroad, but I think if a person is thinking about it, he shouldn't hesitate.

Knowing that you are leaving for a fixed time, and that you are going to work with people who accept and are waiting for you to come, is quite reassuring. Everyone I know who has done an internship abroad, like me, has good memories."

**Would you go back?**

"Of course, I would give everything to go abroad again for my second year internship!"

**What was your favorite moment? What was your least favorite moment?**

"I didn't really have a particular favorite moment, I loved my entire internship from the moment things fell into place little by little and I started to work, and create more affinity with my colleagues and other Erasmus students I had met.

The moment I least enjoyed was leaving!"

## Diversity and Inclusion workshops

**This last month, we have had the pleasure to organize two Diversity and Inclusion workshops dedicated to microaggressions and discriminations in the university context.**

Students from our different partner universities all gathered and shared their opinions and approaches on discriminations they have either experienced or witnessed. Exercises and discussions were carried out in order to exchange perspectives about what identity is, what it feels to belong or to not belong to a group, and what stereotypes and microassaults mean.



**We would like to thank the students for participating and our FORTHEM colleagues for setting up such a nice project!**

# FORTHEM partner universities

Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz (Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz), Germany

University of Burgundy (Université de Bourgogne), France

University of Jyväskylä (Jyväskylän yliopisto), Finland

University of Opole (Uniwersytet Opolski), Poland

University of Palermo (Università degli Studi di Palermo), Italy

University of Latvia (Latvijas Universitāte), Latvia

University of Valencia (Universitat de Valencia), Spain



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