

STUDENT INTERNSHIP AT THE WORLD EXCELLENT WORKPLACE IN BELGIUM

Report from the study visit of internal phd student on Department of Environmental
Management

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During September and October 2018, as a Ph.D. student of a department of Remediation of polluted sites of the faculty of sciences of Matej Bel University, I have passed a two-months internship in a Belgian private company focusing on ways of decontamination of soils contaminated by industrial waste and their valorisation through innovative techniques focused on thermal methods. This topic concerns alternative ways of waste processing which are environmentally friendly in relation to incineration. They represent one of the dominant scientific problems in the area of environmental management. The workplace where I spent my internship represents of the most effective ones in the world in topic of soil decontamination. During the internship, I have also attended (as a member of the research team with my colleague from Belgium) visits of thermal treatment plants in Germany and in the Netherlands. Each of the technological plant was characterized by their specificity and originality. The recovered part through the individual plants have been used or as an asphalt material for road construction or as secondary building material. I also gained experience in relation to the information about ways or, combinations of technological processes and different technological units in order to guarantee 100% success in the decontamination of soils by hazardous pollutants. Since the internship was conducted in a private company, this success guarantee had to be in line with the highest financial profit after the processing. In this way it is possible to set the processing in a realistic and feasible way. At the same time, in the case of waste recovery, I could see in a real way the model of the circular economy as a solution to healthy economic growth in accordance with the protection of the environment.

This topic will also be addressed in my dissertation thesis. Another benefit of my internship was the possibility to communicate in French and learn the basics of other languages of Northern Europe. As my internship took place in the northern part of Belgium - in Flanders, I used English as a work language, while in the Brussels region I used French. Since Flemish is a language related to German and Dutch, I also improved my knowledge of German. Belgium - a small country of different tastes is a paradise for linguists also due to the existence of Brussels - the centre of European Union. Its multiculturalism is felt by openness of locals towards foreigners during visits of museums, shops, public events and spaces, what made my stay even more agreeable.

Two months is a short time, but relatively sufficient time to get to know to get to know new working environment. Thanks to the Erasmus + program, I had the opportunity to learn not

about new workplaces and technologies but also interesting and wise people who are involved in the development of alternative "friendly" waste technologies, which are slowly being promoted in Slovakia as well.