



(From left to right Anett Motzwickler-Németh, Buket Büyüksandıç, Prof. Rita Ambrus)

Bridging Cultures and Science: My Erasmus Journey at the University of Szeged

Sziasztok! My name is Buket Büyüksandıç, a pharmacy student from Süleyman Demirel University in Türkiye. From September 2024 to February 2025, I had the privilege of studying at the University of Szeged through the Erasmus+ exchange program. My semester in Szeged was an eye-opening journey that enriched my academic knowledge, research skills, and cultural understanding.

I chose to participate in the Erasmus+ program because I wanted to experience a different academic environment, improve my research skills, and challenge myself by adapting to a new culture. The University of Szeged, with its strong pharmaceutical research programs, seemed like the perfect place to achieve these goals.

When I first arrived in Szeged, I was immediately captivated by the city's charm. The combination of historical buildings, the lively student atmosphere, and the welcoming people made me feel at home quickly. Although the Hungarian language seemed challenging at first, I was excited to immerse myself in a new culture and learn as much as possible.

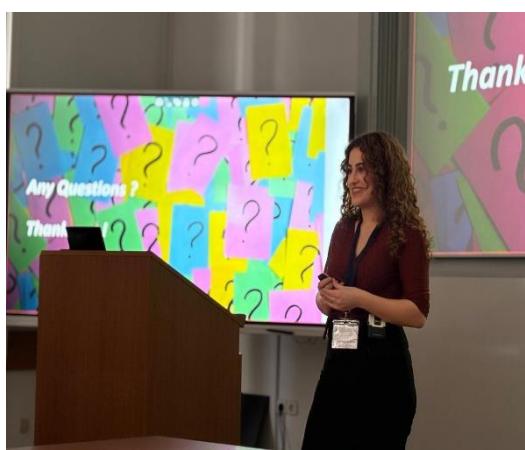
Academic Experience

Unlike traditional Erasmus programs, I did not take any theoretical courses during my time at the University of Szeged. Instead, I focused entirely on preparing my graduation thesis. This gave me the unique opportunity to work on a research project under the supervision of Professor Rita Ambrus and Anett Motzwickler-Németh. Our research centered on the preformulation studies of ibuprofen using gamma-cyclodextrin metal-organic framework (CD-MOF) complexation.

I am incredibly grateful to Anett, whose patience, intelligence, and kindness made this experience truly special. She taught me everything she knew with unwavering enthusiasm, never hesitating to help—even when it came to my poor computer skills! My time in the lab and office was unforgettable, filled with both challenges and rewarding learning experiences.

Throughout the semester, I had the chance to work with advanced laboratory equipment, which I had previously only learned about in theory. By the end of my Erasmus experience, I not only understood the underlying mechanisms of these devices but also gained hands-on expertise in their operation, troubleshooting, and best practices for usage. Anett always encouraged me to work independently, pushing me to step out of my comfort zone. I am still amazed at how much she trusted me! No matter how many mistakes I made, she was always there to guide me, and together, we found solutions to every challenge.

One of the most remarkable aspects of my experience was presenting our research at the Symposium of Young Researchers on Pharmaceutical Technology, Biotechnology, and Regulatory Affairs. With Anett's encouragement, I delivered my very first scientific presentation at an international symposium. Standing alongside PhD-level researchers, discussing our hard work, and answering questions from experts was an invaluable opportunity for my academic and professional growth. This experience not only boosted my confidence but also reinforced my passion for pharmaceutical research.



Cultural and Social Experiences

Alongside my enriching experience in pharmaceutical research, I also had the opportunity to immerse myself in Hungarian culture, particularly its cuisine. Throughout my stay, I explored various traditional foods and desserts, which played a significant role in my cultural experience.

As someone with a sweet tooth, I particularly enjoyed Hungarian desserts such as **gombóc**, **Túró Rudi**, and **Kürtőskalács**. Each of these treats had a unique flavor and texture, making them an unforgettable part of my time in Szeged. I highly recommend trying these delicious desserts to anyone visiting Hungary!

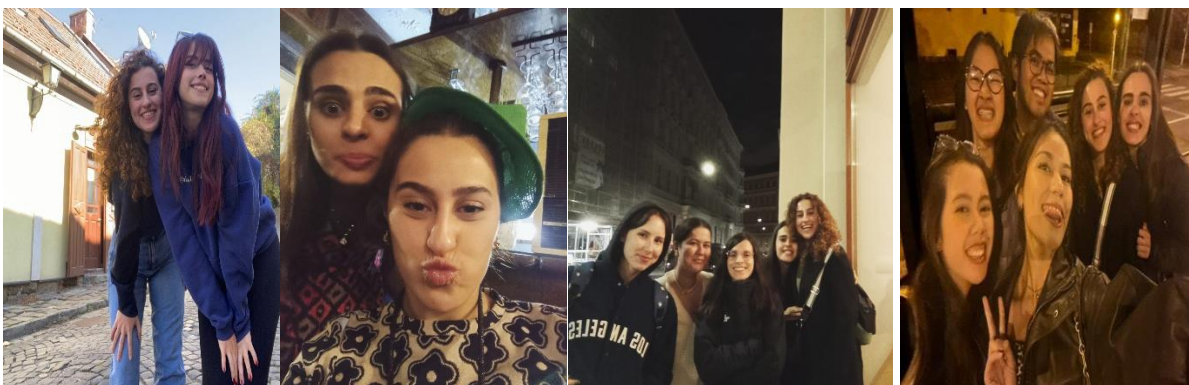


(Gombóc)



(Kürtőskalács)

Exploring Hungarian cuisine was not only a delightful experience but also a way to connect with people from different cultures. However, beyond the delicious food, what truly made my Erasmus journey unforgettable were the incredible friendships I formed during my time in Szeged.



Conclusion

After spending several months in this beautiful city, I left Szeged with unforgettable memories and invaluable experiences. This journey not only deepened my knowledge in my field but also allowed me to discover more about myself. Through this experience, I embarked on a path of self-improvement, gaining a clearer vision of my future. What once felt uncertain has now become more defined, as I have learned to set meaningful and achievable goals.

Beyond academics, the friendships I formed during this time are among the most precious gifts of my Erasmus experience. The connections I made will last a lifetime, and I am truly grateful for every moment spent with incredible people from different cultures. It is impossible to capture the entirety of this journey—the memories, opportunities, and lessons learned—in just a few words.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who made this experience unique and unforgettable. **Special thanks to Professor Rita Ambrus and Anett Motzwickler-Németh** for their invaluable guidance, support, and the opportunities they provided.

Köszönöm szépen! Szeged and this experience will always have a special place in my heart.