



Erasmus+

Changing lives. Opening minds.

INFORMATION FOR INCOMING STUDENTS





Assoc. Prof. Borislav Yurukov, PhD RECTOR

Dear Students,

Welcome to the South-West University „Neofit Rilski“ in Blagoevgrad – the greatest center of education, research and service to community over the Southwestern Bulgaria. As a modern higher education institution, we are striving for excellent achievements on international scale and aiming at ensuring our students with valuable knowledge, skills and competencies thereby prepare them to succeed in their professional and personal endeavours. Our priority is to provide student-centered education by an innovative, research-based training process, recognizing differences and encouraging interdisciplinary cooperation. The academic community of professors, students and administrators as well as the well-equipped university premises create wonderful environment for pursuing studies and enjoying students' life.

All these and a lot more is waiting for you at the South-West University „Neofit Rilski“. Do not miss the opportunity to spend your Erasmus+ mobility period at our university!

Brief History of the University

South-West University „Neofit Rilski“ is a higher education institution of modern Bulgaria. It is a state-owned university, established and functioning by virtue of property and an annual state subsidy secured by the government. The University operates in compliance with all the state regulations. It started in 1975 as an affiliate faculty of the Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski“. In 1983 it was officially decreed as an autonomous higher education institution under the name Higher Institute of Education. Two years later, in 1985, a Scientific Council started to function. It was granted the right to elect associate professors in Education, Psychology, Education for disabled children and Methods of Training. In 1995 with an Act of the Bulgarian Parliament it was given the status of a university under the name South-West University „Neofit Rilski“. It was named after one of the famous Bulgarian enlighteners, scientists and educators, Neofit Rilski, who lived and worked in 19th century.

In 2012 the South-West University "Neofit Rilski" - Blagoevgrad received an institutional accreditation certificate by the National Agency for Evaluation and Accreditation with the mark of 9,26 for the period of 6 years (Minutes No16/26.07.2012).

Currently, the University has 9 faculties encompassing social sciences, humanities, natural sciences, technics and technologies. The degree courses honour several levels of achievements. The range of degrees includes bachelor, master and doctor (PhD). The University provides also continuing education opportunities and is the largest provider of non-credit professional upgrade training all over South-West Bulgaria.



General description of the University



South-West University „Neofit Rilski“ is located in Blagoevgrad, a modern town of about 100 000 citizens. It is situated 100 km south from the capital, Sofia, and near the borders of Greece and the Republic of Macedonia.

The University is housed in several campuses around town consisting of amphitheater lecture halls, teaching and seminar rooms, computer and other specialized laboratories, administrative offices and others. The university also possesses its own sport grounds and facilities, dormitories, canteens, etc.

More than 12 000 undergraduates and post-graduates pursue their studies currently at the South-West University (more than 800 of them are foreign students). The teaching staff and researchers are composed of more than 500 professors and associate professors.

The University provides training in 26 accredited Professional fields of



science offering 65 Bachelor Degree Programs, 92 Master Degree Programmes and 46 Ph.D. Programmes.

The sport facilities create favorable conditions for the implementation of a regular teaching and learning process in particular professional fields and meeting the quality requirements for maintaining sporting and rehabilitation events.

The University Sports Complex for indoor activities adjacent to the existing outdoor student sport complex comprises tens of playgrounds and racing tracks including changing rooms, offices, a handball, a basketball and a volleyball hall with a total of 400 seats.

The University library as an inherent part of the university structure has significantly expanded its role in the process of the students training with more than 170225 volumes in all areas of scientific knowledge.

Inside the library there is specially built electronic reading room where 2200 full text articles from international magazines are available to the readers through EBSCO hosting. Teachers and students have access to ProQuest Central with 22 pieces database in various branches of scientific knowledge with a total of 11000 titles of periodicals, 8000 of which are in full text. ProQuest is becoming a major research resource at all levels in scientific libraries. The Library has also been provided with free access to the databases of Scopus and Science Direct.

Almost all kinds of arts find their place within the structure of the university. Students are provided with opportunity to exchange ideas and demonstrate their talents while pursuing their degree. The demonstration of the best lecturers' and students' achievement in the fields of music, drama and theater, dancing, short and documentary films, fashion shows, dance performances, etc. were made possible thanks to the implementation of various projects, the favorable facilities and equipment alongside with the active cooperation between South-West University and various local, national and European cultural institutions.



Faculties

1. Faculty of Law and History
admin@law.swu.bg
2. Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences
pmf@swu.bg
3. Faculty of Economics
stopfak@swu.bg
4. Faculty of Arts
art@swu.bg
5. Faculty of Pedagogy
fped@swu.bg
6. Faculty of Philology
filologia@swu.bg
7. Faculty of Philosophy
filosofski@swu.bg
8. Faculty of Public Health, Health Care and Sport
fozs@swu.bg
9. Faculty of Technology
tkolej@swu.bg



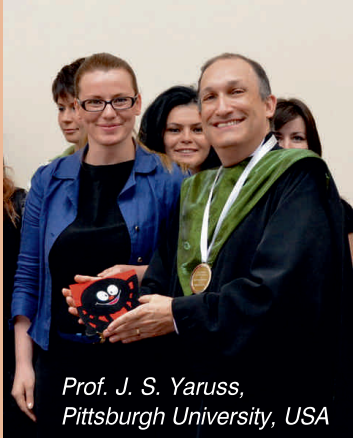
*Prof. Anneli Iiherva
University of Oulu, Finland*



*Dr. Marjan Cosyns
Gent University, Belgium*



*Prof. Bernice Klaben
University of Cincinnati, Ohio, USA*



*Prof. J. S. Yaruss,
Pittsburgh University, USA*



*Dimitar Deliyski, Michigan State University
Foundation Professor, Department Chairperson
Communicative Sciences and Disorders*



*Prof. Edward Conture, Vanderbilt University,
USA lectures at SWU*



*Prof. Mark Johnson, Peter Francis and Gareth Jones,
Leeds Beckett University, United Kingdom*



*Dr. Sarah Vanhoutte,
Gent University, Belgium*

Academic Calendar

The academic year usually start in the beginning of September and lasts around 9 months. It is divided in two semesters. The two semestrial system requires 15 weeks of classes for each semester. The semesters are followed by three-weeks examination periods. Between the semesters there is a two-weeks winter vacation.

During the semesters the semesters attend lectures, participate in seminars and workshops and do practical or clinical work. The students pass examinations during the sessions to demonstrate the knowledge and skills they have acquired during the semester. The main form of assessing knowledge is written examination.

National Holidays

The South-West University „Neofit Rilski“ respects all official and national holidays.

January 1 - New Year Day

March 3 - Liberation Day

May 1 - International Labour's Day

May 6 - Bulgarian Army Day

May 24 - Bulgarian Literacy Day

September 6 - Bulgarian Consolidation Day

September 22 - Bulgarian Independence Day



Grading System

The Grading System at all schools of Bulgaria has been decreed by the Higher Education Act and the long educational tradition. The knowledge and skills of the students are assessed on a six mark rating scale. These are: Excellent (6.00), Very Good (5.00), Good (4.00), Satisfactory (3.00) and Poor (2.00). An examination is considered successfully passed if the mark is at least Satisfactory (3.00). The SWU grading system is transferable to the ECTS grading system:

ECTS GRADE	ECTS DEFINITION	S-W UNIVERSITY GRADE	
A	EXCELLENT Outstanding performance with only minor errors	6	EXCELLENT
B	VERY GOOD Above the average standard but with some errors	5	VERY GOOD
C	GOOD Generally sound work with a number of notable errors	4	GOOD
D	SATISFACTORY Fair but with significant shortcomings	3	SATISFACTORY
E	SUFFICIENT Performance meets the minimum criteria	3	SATISFACTORY
FX/F	FAIL Some more work required before the credit can be awarded	2	POOR
F	FAIL Considerable further work is required	2	POOR



International Educational Programmes and Cooperation

The South-West University has accepted a Strategy for Development (2012-2020) in accordance to the Europe 2020 Strategy. The vision of the University is to be an internationally recognizable, prestigious and dynamic European institution of higher education that offers high level of education and research. EU Erasmus+ program is helping to translate advance knowledge through research-based teaching. Achieving the high international standards of excellence Erasmus+ program develop new collaborations.

The University actively cooperates with many institutions within various international and national research and educational programmes and projects.



Prof. Robert F. Orlikoff, Dean of the College of Allied Health Sciences, East Carolina University, Greenville, USA

ERASMUS+ INTER-INSTITUTIONAL AGREEMENTS

- Michigan State University, USA
- University of Pittsburgh, USA
- Moscow State Pedagogical University, Russia
- University of Strasbourg, France
- Lorraine University in Nancy, France
- University of Salzburg, Austria
- Aristotle University in Thessaloniki, Greece
- University of Vigo, Spain
- University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki, Greece
- La Sapienza University in Rome, Italy



Assoc. Prof. Kurt Eggers, Thomas More University, Antwerp, Belgium

ERASMUS+ INTER-INSTITUTIONAL AGREEMENTS

- University of Zagreb, Croatia
- Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, Romania
- University of Rennes, France
- University of Potsdam, Germany
- Charles University in Prague, Czech republic
- University of Ljubljana, Slovenia
- Transilvania University in Brasov, Romania
- Westpomeranian University of Technology in Szczecin, Poland
- Cardinal Stefan University in Warsaw, Poland
- Afyon University, Turkey
- Nova University of Lisbon, Portugal
- University of Applied Sciences in Graz, Austria
- Technical University in Chemnitz, Germany
- Jules Verne University in Amiens, France
- University of Orleans, France
- University of Aveiro, Portugal
- University of Pavia, Italy
- Technical University in Ostrava, Czech republic
- Technical University in Vilnius, Lithuania
- University of Tartu, Estonia
- University of Bielsko, Poland
- Romanian-american University in Bucurest, Romania
- Deusto University in Bilbao, Spain
- University of Economics in Bratislava, Slovakia
- University of Szeged, Hungary
- Maria Curie-Sklodowska University in Lublin, Poland
- Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun, Poland
- University of Lodz, Poland
- University of West Bohemia in Pilsen, Czech republic
- Masaryk University in Brno, Czech republic
- Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia
- University of Istanbul, Turkey
- Free University in Brussels, Belgium
- University of Lund, Sweden
- University of Huelva, Spain
- University of Cadiz, Spain
- Complutense University of Madrid, Spain
- RWTH Aachen University, Germany
- University of Florence, Italy
- University for foreigners in Perugia, Italy
- University of Palermo, Italy
- University of Applied Sciences in Helsinki, Finland
- UNIVERSITY OF VERSAILLES SAINT-QUENTIN-EN-YVELINES, France
- Karadeniz Technical University, Trabzon, Turkey
- University of Arts „George Enescu“, Iasi, Romania
- Jagellonian University in Krakow, Poland
- Ludwigsburg University of Education, Germany
- University of Applied Sciences in Zittau-Goerlitz, Germany
- University of Oulu, Finland
- University of Gent, Belgium
- University Thomas More, Antwerpen, Belgium
- Leeds Beckett University, Leeds, United Kingdom
- VIVES University College, Belgium
- Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, Macedonia
- Istanbul Medeniyet University, Istanbul, Turkey etc.

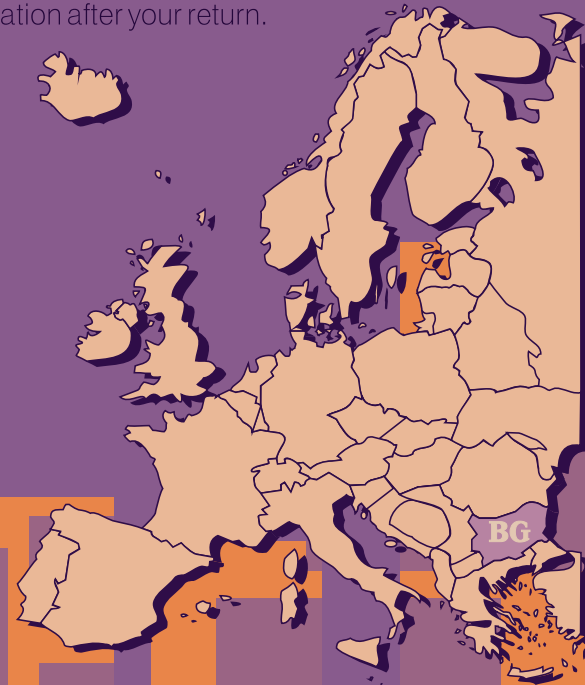
Practical Information

As an Erasmus+ Student you have the following rights:

- To sign Learning Agreement with the university that sends you and the university that accepts you.
- When you finish your education you have to receive Transcript of Records
- Academic recognizing of the ECTS you have received during your education.
- No academic fees, fees for registrations, fees for exams or usage of laboratories and libraries should be paid during the Erasmus+ period.
- The student's scholarship is kept during the Erasmus+ period.

As an Erasmus+ Student we expect you to:

- Perform the circumstances and obligations of the individual Erasmus+ Contract.
- Assure that all the changes connected with the period of education are included in the signed Learning Agreement.
- Realize the full period of education, take the exams, observe the rules and regulations of the sending and receiving institution.
- Prepare written report for the period of your education after your return.



How to get to Blagoevgrad

Arriving to Sofia by Plane

From Sofia airport you can reach the Central Bus Station by subway or by bus.

By subway

Take the RED Line of Sofia subway. When you reach the Serdika station switch the lines and take the BLUE Line. Get off at Station Central Rail Station. The Central Bus Station is right next to the Central Rail Station.

By bus

From Sofia Airport to the Central Bus Station (railway station) you have to change two buses:

1. From the airport to Pliska Hotel:
 - from Terminal 1 - bus 84
 - from Terminal 2 - bus 284
2. From Pliska Hotel to the Central Bus Station (railway station) - one of the following buses: 213, 214, 305, 313.

From Sofia to Blagoevgrad by Bus

Buses depart from Sofia Central Bus Station on every hour. It is near to the Central Railway Station. It takes about 1 hour and 40 minutes to get to Blagoevgrad. The cost of the one way ticket is about 5-6 euros.
www.centralnaavtogara.bg

Public transport runs to the city center. Taxis are available at the station as well. The cost to the city center and to all campuses is approximately 1.5 euro.

From Sofia to Blagoevgrad by Train

Blagoevgrad is 2 hours and a half by train from Sofia Central Station. The price is about 3-4 euros.
<http://www.bdz.bg>

From Sofia to Blagoevgrad by Car

If you have decided to travel to Blagoevgrad by car, just take the E-79 International Road from Sofia to Greece. The trip lasts approximately one and a half hour.



Official Language

The official language in Bulgaria is Bulgarian. The Bulgarian alphabet consists of Cyrillic characters.



Alphabet Transcriptions

А	A
Б	B
В	V
Г	G
Д	D
Е	E
Ж	Zh
З	Z
И	I
Й	J
К	K
Л	L
М	M
Н	N
О	O
П	P
Р	R
С	S
Т	T
У	U
Ф	F
Х	H
Ц	Ts
Ч	Ch
Ш	Sh
Щ	Sht
Ъ	
Ь	
Ю	Iu
Я	Ia

Common Bulgarian Expressions

- Hello / Hi - Здравей (zdravei)
Good morning - Добро утро (Dobro utro)
Good afternoon - Добър ден (Dobar den)
Good evening - Добра вечер (Dobra vecher)
Good night - Лека нощ (Leka nosht)
Good bye /bye - Довиждане (Dovizhdane)
How are you - Как си/ Как сте (Kak si / Kak ste)
I am fine - Добре съм (Dobre sam)
Yes / No - Да / Не (Da / Ne)
Maybe - Може би (Mozhe bi)
What are you doing? - Какво правиш? (Kakvo pravish)
All the best - Всичко най-хубаво (Vsichko nai hubavo)
Regards - Поздрави (Pozdravi)
Thank you - Благодаря (Blagodaria)
You are welcome - Моля (Molia)
Please - Моля (Molia)
Excuse me - Извинете (Izvinete)
Sorry - Извинявай (Izviniavai)
What's the time? - Колко е часът (Kolko e chasat)
Do you speak... - Говорите ли ... (Govorite li...)
... English - английски (angliiski)
... Bulgarian - български (balgarski)
... French - френски (frenski)
... German - немски (nemski)
... Greek - гръцки (gratski)
... Italian - италиански (italianski)
... Spanish - испански (ispanski)
See you soon - Ще се видим скоро (Shte se vidim skoro)

BLAGOEVGRAD



BLAGOEVGRAD - A UNIVERSITY TOWN

Blagoevgrad is a unique place to study and live in. It is a modern town that combines the advantages of a big city with its cinemas, theaters, operas, public libraries, banks, bars and restaurants and the cozy atmosphere of a small town with its friendly environment, comfortable, secure and inexpensive life. The green parks and streets as well as the wonderful surroundings make the town a very pleasant place to stay. Its modern buildings and facilities and the comfortable infrastructure make it easy to live and work. One can reach any part of the town by taxi or a bus in minutes for less than a Euro. The cost of living is inexpensive and there is a plenty of cafes and restaurants all over town. Its strategic position make it fast and easy to reach so many places of interest as everything is so close - the famous ski resort Bansko, the ancient Rila Monastery, Sofia - the Bulgarian capital or Thessaloniki in Greece as well as many many others. The mild climate, fresh air and the healthy mineral waters attract many people to come here on holidays. Due to its merits Blagoevgrad is a proffered place to many scientists, artists, actors, musicians and painters who organize numerous conferences, meetings, seminars and culture events like festivals, concerts, presentations and performances during all year. The town is famous with its folklore ensemble and singing and dances schools that preserve the precious traditions of the region.

Blagoevgrad is a town of universities. Students land a spirit of vitality and exuberance to the community. Every year lots of young people are getting together to pursue they studies here. The academic atmosphere and the comfortable conditions of the town give all the opportunities for students to concentrate on their studies aiming at best performances and achievements. They enjoy all the hospitality and support of the local people. That's why studying at South-West University is a choice of thousands of youngsters.

The Region and the Country in Brief

The Region

Location: Southwestern part of Bulgaria; borders with Macedonia and Greece.
Size: 5,500 sq. km. **Administrative structure:** Blagoevgrad District, covering 14 municipalities, 12 towns and 259 villages. **Administrative center - Blagoevgrad.**

Mountains. Nine Mountains: Pirin, Rila, Western Rhodoppes, Slavyanka, Stargach, Ograzhden, Belasitsa, Vlahina, Maleshevska.





The Country - Republic of Bulgaria

Rila Mountain: 2 629 sq.km. Highest peak - Musala (2925 m); 219 High mountain lakes; over 2000 plant varieties and a rich animal world.

Pirin Mountain: 2 585 sq.km. 60 peaks over 2500 m. Highest peak - Vihren (2914 m). Alpine landscape. 176 cirque lakes, the biggest 100 decares in size. 1700 vascular plant species; 24 fish species; 11 amphibian species; 27 reptile species; 217 bird species; 75 mammal species.

Protected areas. Two national parks - Pirin and Rila. Ten reserves.

Mineral waters. Balneology developed in Sandanski, Ognyanovo SPA Resort, Dobrinishte. Public mineral water swimming pools: Blagoevgrad, Simitli, Sandanski, Petrich, Gotse Delchev, Ognyanovo, Yakorouda.



Flag



Coat of Arms

Capital
(and largest city)

Sofia
42°41'N 23°19'E

Official language(s)

Bulgarian

Ethnic groups
(2011)

84.8% Bulgarians,
8.8% Turks,
4.9% Roma,
1.5% others

Government

Parliamentary
democracy

Area

- Total
- Water (%)

110,993.6 km²
0.3



Population

- 2011 census 7,364,570
- Density 66.2/km²

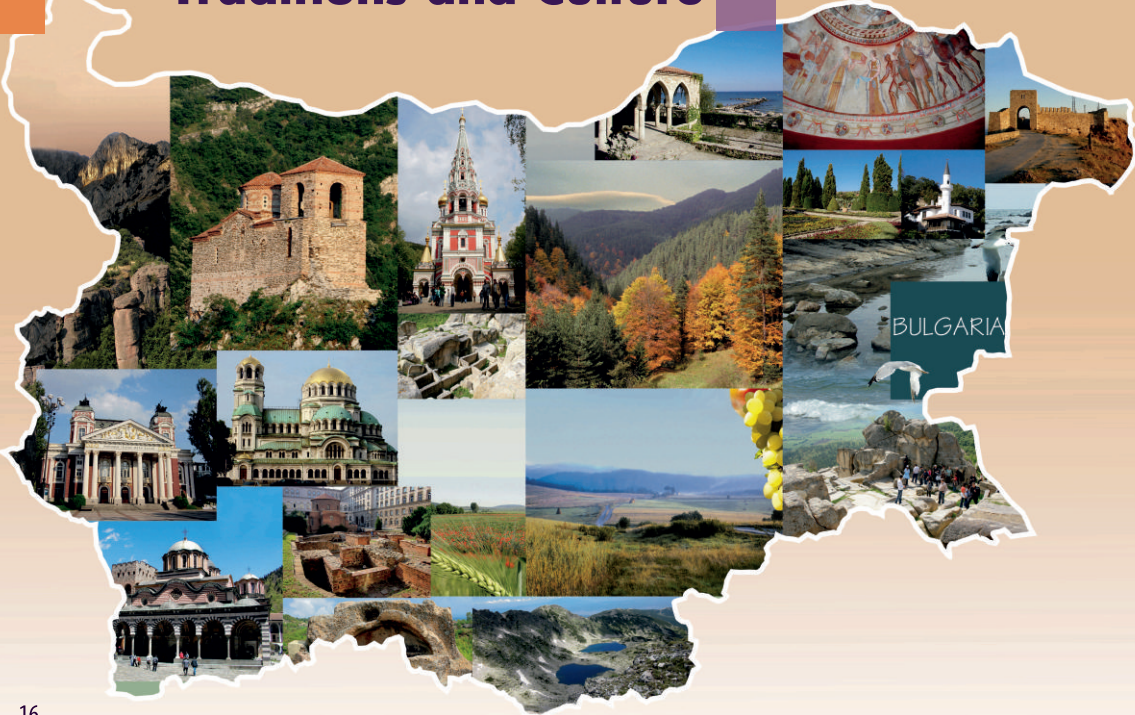
Currency

Lev (BGN)

Time zone

- Summer (DST) EET (UTC+2)
EEST (UTC+3)

Traditions and Culture







SOUTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
'NEOFIT RILSKI'



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