

My name is Ordanche Ribarski and I'm a 6th-year medical student from the Republic of North Macedonia. As a member of the IFMSA family, I had the opportunity to visit the beautiful Bydgoszcz and participate in a research project at the Department for Clinical Microbiology. The aim of the research project was to explain the characteristics of *Enterococcus* spp. presented in the samples from lakes and watercourses.

I would like to express my gratitude for the opportunity to contribute to the research project. During my stay in the laboratory, my mentors, prof. dr hab. Krzysztof Skowron and dr Katarzyna Grudlewska-Buda supported my eagerness to broaden my knowledge. The advice given by them was really helpful in completing the project. Furthermore, the team encouraged me to become more independent in the lab and master the commonly used techniques in the microbiology lab, such as the streak plate method, preparing Mueller-Hinton agar for antimicrobial testing, testing the antibiotic susceptibility of *Enterococcus* spp by using the disc diffusion method, interpreting the results for the antibiotic susceptibility and polymerase chain reaction for detecting virulence genes of *Enterococcus* spp.

Aside from my daily activities in the lab, I spent the free time exploring not only Bydgoszcz itself but also the nearby towns of Toruń and Gdańsk. The communication with my Polish colleagues enabled me to discover the Polish cuisine and learn some basic phrases in Polish.

Overall, I find this experience unique and memorable. It will always bring back warm memories of the time spent in the lab with friendly colleagues and discovering beautiful Poland for the very first time.