

How did my trip contribute to my research project?

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My research trip has contributed to my project substantially. There are a number of reasons to this. One of the reasons is that I was able to research about Hungary in Hungary. That was the biggest advantage as there are only a few publications and books in Canada that dealt with my topic of immigration in the EU and in Hungary.

The Parliamentary Library was the main resource centre for my research as all the policy papers, parliamentary speeches are kept there. It is also the library that collects EU related information as well. I was able to find a lot of helpful material in the Hungarian libraries that were useful for my essay.

The materials that I was able to find in the library were the main sources that I used for the background of my research essay that later served helpful for the analytical part. I was able to find the newest data and statistics published on immigration. I also had access to both Hungarian and EU policy papers.

The second advantage of the research trip was that I was able to conduct interviews with Hungarian officials and experts and also with a member of the European Commission in Brussels. Some of the most important contributions were:

- 1.) The Hungarian interviewees, especially the experts had such an overall view of immigration that it helped me see correlations that from myself I might not have seen. Talking to them gave me a different perspective on immigration related issues.
- 2.) They were able to point out problems in the European and Hungarian systems that only those can see who work in it. As an example they explained that immigration is lacking its centralised institutions on Governmental level, therefore policy making is extremely difficult.
- 3.) The experts were also very helpful in finding additional material for my research, pointing out documents and publications that I should look at.

Conducting interviews with officials of the Hungarian government in general reassured the experts' opinions. Their contribution to my research was mainly in understanding the mechanisms of immigration policy development within Hungary and in connection to the EU. One member of the Permanent Representation of Hungary in Brussels was able to give insight on the actual policy making procedure between Hungary and the EU. Not to mention the interview that I was able to conduct with a member of the European Commission. The interview with her made me realise how important immigration is in Europe at the moment, how much emphasis the topic gets. The interview with her was able to make me understand the EU's stand on immigration.

Honestly I also have to admit that the research trip altered my research focus a bit. Whereas in the beginning I was planning to write about the different levels of immigration policy development – for example – from public to parliamentary level - I decided to focus more on the actual policies themselves hoping to come up with a framework of proposed immigration policy directions. Especially the information gathered from the interviews allowed me to see immigration from a different perspective, which made me interested in new problems. Returning to Canada I more or less knew what the basic elements of the research essay's conclusion will be.