





Dear Firsties*,

Welcome!

Welcome to an adventure that you will never forget. An adventure that will make you laugh and cry and shiver and feel like you want to scream – all at the same time. But most of all, an adventure that you will share - share with people, who will become the best friends you ever had.

The words that await you on the following pages will be your sneak peak guide into this adventure until you come to Mostar (then... you can just forget about all this and actually do all the amazing things you've read about here). Protect this guide with your life toilet paper.

We remember our first moments in Mostar. We were confused, excited and scared of all those people that seemed to know exactly where to go, how to behave and what to do, meanwhile we were clueless... trying to be everywhere at the same time, but not knowing how to go there.

Don't be scared, and know it will be fine.

You will talk to people and people will talk to you. You will slowly figure out how the city works, and where your place is in its dazzling whole.

Accept this adventure and open your eyes, open your ears and open your heart.

And stay open, because there is always more to discover. Bit by bit you will get to know all the secrets of this amazing place, the stories of the people you are here with.

Stay open and you will be amazed, everyday again, more than you could have ever imagined.

You will walk through the streets of Mostar and you will recognize what war means. You will lie in the park on a sunny day and understand how diverse and beautiful friends can be. You will

have a random coffee in a nice café in Mostar and realize that this person, who you've never talked to before, shares your ideals. You will go to school and understand what it means to learn together with people who all want to learn. You will talk with someone till deep in the night and see that what you previously believed might have been wrong.

Stay open and it will all be yours.

Of course, it will be hard sometimes, it will be tough, but know that there are people around you who love you and who care, who will always care

You are surrounded by 190 people of the most different backgrounds, all with their own stories, some so unbelievable, that you will not forget them for the rest of your life. These people have so much to give you, so be willing to take. And in return, you can share. Because you as well have a story, a passion, things you can contribute to this community, to make it even better than it was.

Stay open and enjoy the incredible adventure of UWC Mostar. An adventure of a lifetime!

Welcome, dear Firsties.

Welcome home.

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Your loving/excited second years

(Generation 2014-2016)

***Firsties:** The plural of 'Firstie' – that's you! All First-year students are known as Firsties. The people in your year-group are your 'Co-years' and the students who have already been at UWC for a year are your 'Second years' – that's us! Don't worry if this sounds confusing right now, you'll get the hang of it.

Wait, where are we going again?

Mostar



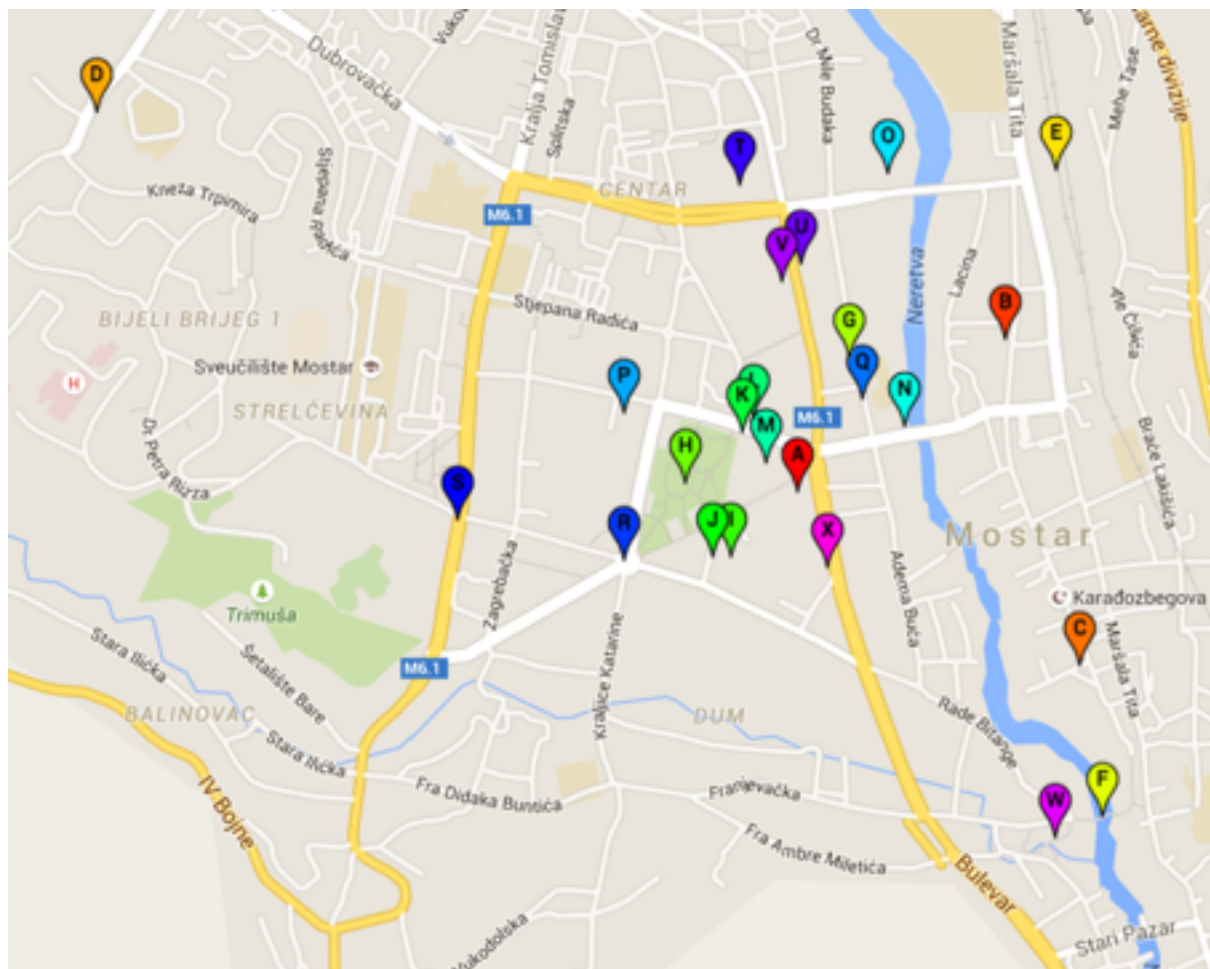
Mostar is a city in the south of Bosnia and Herzegovina, formerly one of the most ethnically diverse cities in the country, and today suffering geographical division between ethnic groups. During the war, this old city was completely destroyed, including the heart of Mostar: The Old Bridge (Stari Most).

Mostar has been most famous for this beautiful historic Ottoman-style bridge rebuilt in 2004, almost 11 years after its destruction. A significant portion of the city has been rebuilt and visitors might be surprised to see that this formerly war-torn city is a lively and beautiful tourist destination once again.

This place might seem foreign to you at the start, but you'll know its in's and out's in no time!

A little map of Mostar

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| A UWC Mostar | I School canteen | Q Patak Pizza and Palma Dön... |
| B Musala Residence | J Jump Jump | R Rondo |
| C Mejdan Residence | K Coco Loco | S Arabica |
| D Susac Residence | L Old Bank | T Mepas Mall |
| E Mostar Bus and Train Station | M Old Man's (Kamena) | U Post Office |
| F Old Bridge | N Bristol Hotel & Café | V Calamus Rooftop Café |
| G OKC Abrasevic | O Del Rio Restaurant | W Black Dog |
| H Parc | P Palacinke Bar | X The Pink Hospital |



EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE RESIDENCES!

Unlike most UWCs, we don't have a campus, instead we have three amazing houses where we all live together (which is pretty awesome - living next door to your best friends...). And all three of them are amazing, although of course everyone has their favorite residence. On the Croat side of town there is the oldest residence, **Sušac**. On the other side, the Bosniak side, we have **Musala** and **Mejdan**.



SUŠAC

The residence that is the farthest away from the School building, about 25 minutes walking. But it's known to be the coziest one and you can always find people in the yellow and now decorated corridors. It's the residence where you can see the stars at night

and where the canteen is, which means you have the best and freshest food. The rooms have two or three people in them and it has the lowest rate of people per bathroom.

Namex is the closest store, about 3 minutes walking in the direction of school. A bigger mall, Pyramida, is 10 minutes away and with 15 minutes you are at Mepas Mall, where you can buy basically everything. And at night the illegal bakery opens next to Sušac, for the tastiest and cheapest bread in town :)

MUSALA

The residence with the Music Room, Visual Arts Room and Theatre Room in the Basement (to which you have to *earn* the keys). It's super close to school: 6 minutes if you are a fast walker, 8



if you are slow and 10 if you have a serious problem. The rooms have two, three or four people in them and there is a kitchen where dinner is delivered. Outside is the famous fig tree and if the weather is slightly bearable there are always people sitting outside on the stairs chatting, singing or drawing. It has been decorated recently by your second years and third years, and you can go on a hunt through the floors to find the painting that you like the most! Musala Market is a 27 second walk and amazingly cheap, which (in combination with the lack of workout) is why all Musalans have to try a bit harder not to get fat. But, again, the figs...

MEJDAN

Mejdan residence is the newest residence for the UWC students in Mostar. Mejdan's town makes it a surrounded by right across the residence is the to the other two, guys are floors, living with also the schools psychology has the biggest



allows Mejdanis to have a lot of cool movie nights and to be the activity place for some of the proposed CASes. Mejdan is just a 10 minute walk from our school.

location near the old perfect place to live, shops of all kinds, and Neretva River. This smallest in comparison together 37 girls and distributed among 3 their house-mom who is counselor and teacher. Mejdan also common room that

ROOMMATES

In Mostar, you will share a room, if you want to or not. (But it's the coolest thing, trust us) You will literally live together with one or more person(s)



from completely different cultures. It will be hard and if you really really really don't get along there are always solutions, but you HAVE TO try. A piece of advice: love your roommates as siblings from the beginning, but don't be afraid to speak up if there is something wrong, or you will just suffer silently... be flexible, be open, communicate, reach compromises... if you work on your roommate relationship, you'll have a great experience!

VISITORS

If you have family coming over, that's amazing and they are always welcome! But, they cannot stay in the residences, unfortunately... There is plenty of good apartments, hostels and hotels in town for all price ranges and you can of course stay with your relatives and they can visit you, but it is one of the stricter rules...

Visitors can also be your friends from other residences who come to sleepover. These are only possible on Friday and Saturday nights.

Rule for sleepover is that you must indicate a free bed in the room you plan to sleep for the night in the other residence, and contact both your house-mama and the house-mama of the residence you wish to sleep in, and they are the ones who will approve.

Tip: It's very tempting to stick to your residence, mainly in the beginning, but if you only live in one of the three houses you'll have only a third of the experience in the end...



HOW TO PROPERLY PREPARE YOURSELF ACADEMICALLY

You don't.

(Ok, if you have something that you seriously struggle with like Math or something or if you want to improve your English skills before coming – feel free to do so over the summer. But you are seriously not expected to pre-study the IB syllabus or any of that.)

In Induction Week, there will be a placement test for both Math and English, which will be used to determine your *initial* placement in these subjects. To help you in this endeavor, the maths teachers are sharing the « Prior Learning » part of the book, of which the summary includes everything you should know how to do in maths before coming to Mostar. So if you really care about your placement in the subject, you can study up a bit.

Follow this link : <https://www.dropbox.com/s/gxmy16x227lw9a/Math%20Prior%20Learning.pdf?dl=0>

And that form where you write your classes is really not set in stone — you'll get to choose your initial schedule during Induction Week, and for the first month of classes you can explore all the classes as much as you want.

For now, just...



**KEEP
CALM
AND
ENJOY
FIRST TERM**

IMPORTANT PRACTICAL THINGS

Cultural weeks and UWC open day

Truly a highlight, these weeks are dedicated to the celebration of a particular culture or cultural group (e.g. "Balkan", "Middle Eastern", "Nordic", etc.) The students and even staff and faculty from that part of the world will prepare activities throughout a whole week to represent their culture with (they can do it however they like: dances, workshops, cooking sessions, bonfires, movie screenings, anything...) One of the evenings during culture week is traditionally held in the school's Spanish room or in Abrašević as a **FEAST**-like event, where students get to share recipes and massive amounts of food from home. People often also have cultural presentations during the feast.

We will have regional culture weeks.
Please think about how you want to



represent your particular culture and prepare for it. If like a few of us you share two or more nationalities and cultures, why not plan for both? Most likely you do want to get your national costume, learn to cook a traditional dish, make a choreography, prepare a presentation, get your flag...

Have fun with it!

UWC day is on September 21st (the international day of peace) and it is celebrated in our school and all other UWCs at the same time but in different ways. Last year we had an interactive event that we shared with the Mostar community.



On UWC Day, which is Sept 21, we're planning to hold an "around the world in 80 minutes" event on the Spanish Square (a park area in front of the school building) where everyone has a table for their country so that people from the Mostar community can walk around to meet people from all over the world, talk to them about whatever they're interested in, try some

cultural food, etc. We allocate the Bosnian students around so there is at least one translator for each table/country. We will also print little "passports" for children, so they can get them stamped as they "travel" around the world. Last year was the first year we did this, and it was a huge success!

So the idea here is that all our students (wearing their national) set up a table for their country with:

- a flag,
- a food - whether you cook something or just bring some snacks from home
- some pictures/postcards,
- some music/instrument,
- a stamp of something from your country (for the passports) (here's an image of what we are thinking of <http://amzn.to/1plokRT>)

Or whatever else you can think of or want to share!

You DO NOT need to get all of this, and if the stamp is hard to find, don't worry too much about it. Think about a small table that you will stand at with a few things to show people who've never been to your country what it's like. Don't stress about this!

What to pack



- **Summer clothes:** You'll want to have shorts and sleeveless tops, but be sure to bring appropriate clothes for school – shorts/skirts should be knee length. In particular, girls should make sure they have enough modest clothes to get through a *hot* school week, as there is only air conditioning in two rooms in the school. Consider bringing knee length dresses and skirts if you like them, they can be a comfortable way to stay cool.
- **Winter clothes:** During winter in Mostar, it rains A LOT. It can pour for hours at a time without stopping. And it's not cat pee, it's VIOLENT rain. So make sure you have a quality jacket, **rain boots**, and an umbrella (you can always buy umbrellas here — you'll buy more than one anyway) Also, consider buying a rain cover for your backpack so that your laptop/notebooks don't suffer water damage. Winter can also get a bit cold, although it's usually never under 0°C. Regardless, you'll want some big cozy jumpers, scarves, etc.
- **Formal clothes:** We have two formal events, Winter Gala and Prom. For Prom or Winter Gala, some wear short dresses and some wear long dresses, it's really up to you. Guys wear suits for both events. You should also consider bringing some **business attire** if you are planning on being in Debate or MUN, as there are dress codes for competitions and conferences.
- **Shoes:** Open toed sandals are acceptable for school, flip-flops are not. Sneakers are also okay. Take this seriously – you don't want to be sent back to the residence the morning of a test! Also, since your main form of transportation is walking, make sure your shoes are good quality.
- **Socks and underwear:** preferably distinctive ones so that you can identify them from your roommate's.
- **Swimsuit**
- **Sunglasses and good sunscreen**
- **Backpack:** Basically all the school supplies you need are provided by the school, so you don't need to worry about bringing any with you (unless they are super special to you — or you want some of better

quality, as the ones provided by school don't hold very long). **A pocket knife** can also be super useful to have for everything from hiking trips to midnight snacks.

- **Posters, pictures, etc. to decorate your walls** – it definitely will make your room feel more like home! Additionally, you may want to bring an **alarm clock**.
- **A colorful water bottle and/or thermos** – to stay hydrated and be eco-friendly.
- **Hiking boots** (if you like hiking)
- **Music, movies, food, etc. from your culture** to share during your Culture Week and open day. Emphasis on the food! :)

When packing clothing, a good rule of thumb is that if you don't wear it now, you won't wear it in Mostar, so don't bother packing it.

Also, a word of advice for internationals specifically: You can get almost anything you need in Mostar. So, for example, don't waste precious space and weight in your suitcase on shampoo – you'll be able to buy it in Mostar.

Last, but definitely not least, the most important thing you are bringing is you! **Have an open mind, a big smile, and lots of enthusiasm for an amazing year!**

Pocket money



The local currency is konvertibilna marka ("convertible mark"), known as KM (BAM through ISO 4217). It was traditionally tied to the German mark (as the name would suggest), but is now tied to the Euro, so that 1,95 BAM = 1 EUR.

The price level is relatively low. A cup of coffee at a café normally costs 2 KM, and typical grocery items such as bread and milk are generally in the 1-2 KM range. A meal ranges from 5 KM (kebab) to 25 KM (beef at an expensive restaurant), with a pizza at roughly 10 KM. A 30 minute bus fare (to e.g. Medjugorje) costs around 5 KM.

Mostar is a commercially developed city with >100,000 citizens. Almost everything is available, and probably also far cheaper than in your home country.

On average, (we think) people spend no more than 200 BAM (or 100 EUR) per month. But everyone has different spending habits.

Credit cards, debit cards and cash cards can be very convenient, depending on your preferences. Check to see if your bank has a branch in B&H, because you won't have to pay a commission then, and the commission can be quite pricy (up to 5€ e.g.)

Equipment

Bosnia and Herzegovina uses a type C or F electricity plug, so remember that if you aren't coming from BiH, you have to check the type of plug and if needed bring a converter along. More information can be found here; <http://www.iec.ch/worldplugs/?ref=extfooter>.

Medical care

There is a hospital very close by school and the residences, with doctors who can attend to medical needs. The school has had experience with these hospitals in the past and found its standards of care adequate. If you are under medical treatment, make sure you have enough medicine for the whole time you're away from home and even more in case of loss. There are equipped pharmacies in Mostar, but if you have very specific medication that you worry you won't find here, you might want to bring it with you, also, if there is medicine you use on a regular level that you would need to take from the pharmacy, bring your prescription.

If you wear glasses, bring a spare and the needed prescription for replacement. Replacing lost or broken glasses may take a week in Mostar.

Language

The official language at UWC is English. Speaking in a non-English language in a common setting, e.g. during meals, is considered rude. Try to speak it at all times, and if not sure of a word, describe it before turning to a (possible) country-mate. The common name given to the languages spoken in this region is 'local'.



Diversity and respect

We are an international community and thus culturally diverse. It is very important that you keep in mind that some acts – for you very obvious – can be very unusual or disrespectful towards others. Try to come with an open mind and respect each other.

Two ears, one mouth, and a heart bigger than all of them combined.

SOME COOL COLLEGE SERVICES

Your address:
Name - Last name
UWC in Mostar
Spanski trg 1,
88000 Mostar
Bosnia & Herzegovina

Post

The letters or postal cards are directly brought to school and can be found either in the Spanish room or in Nina Spago's office. For everything concerning packages, you will find as well at the exact same place where letters are delivered, a small yellow paper indicating your name, the weight of your package and the limit date to retrieve it. Only packages coming from Bosnia-Herzegovina are not taxed by the post office, all the rest is. The tax is calculated from the weight of your package and where it comes from. It generally is around 10 KM, so always make sure to have cash with you when going to get a package at the post office. Caution! If you come too late, they charge you even more.

Bike Rental

Bikes can be rented for free. The number of available bikes is not equal to the number of students, so you will likely have to share your bike with other people.



Climbing hall

The climbing hall is situated 15 min of a walk from Musala. Climbing shoes are also provided for free to those who would need some, though we would advise you to bring your own if you already have some. The school rents the hall one evening per week, on Tuesdays, but there is still the possibility to go climbing there more often if the owners agree.

Student Card

You will be given a student card by the school, card with which you might get reductions (e.g: travel tickets), and it can be used outside of Bosnia Herzegovina.

Buses for Firsties' arrival

You might be wondering how you will get to Mostar once you landed at the airport. For your first arrival, the school will organize buses which will come to pick you up at the airport (Sarajevo, Split and Dubrovnik only) and there will be second years to welcome you. An email will be sent out over the summer asking for your means of transportation, where and when you'll arrive.

AMAZING TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES



CAPITALS

Sarajevo (BiH) 130 km
Zagreb (Croatia) 420 km
Belgrade (Serbia) 420 km
Pristina (Kosovo) 530 km
Podgorica (Monten.) 208 km

BOSNIAN COAST

Neum 74 km

MONTENEGRIAN COAST

Budva 210 km
Kotor 185 km

CROATIAN COAST

Dubrovnik 140 km
Korcula 200 km
Ston 103 km
Makarska 90 km
Split 160 km

NICE NEARBY PLACES

Blagaj 13 km
Jablanica 46 km
Konjic 69 km

OTHER PLACES IN BiH WORTH VISITING

Zenica 165 km
Banja Luka 235 km
Srebrenica 265 km
Tuzla 240 km
Bosnian Pyramids 130

COOL PLACES ABROAD

Drvengrad 210 km
National parks (Croatia, Montenegro..)
...



THE ROAD

BUS

The debatably 'well-organized' bus network in the Balkans is probably the most commonly

used medium to travel. Mostar has two bus stations where you can check bus-rides and purchase tickets. Prices vary from an 18 KM round trip ticket to Sarajevo to an 80 KM round trip to Zagreb.

(The secret way)

Ask your second years about this free way of traveling to almost everywhere that is close by. Not very reliable, but it's always a little adventure. ;)



BIKE

If you don't possess a bike, you can always borrow one from school or friends, explore the country's beautiful roads and enjoy the feeling of complete freedom and no impact on the environment. The best

place to buy a bike is known to be Vrapcici.

Even if you're a bit short on money, you have opportunities and traveling alternatives to explore the Balkans. With free transport as (the secret way) and cycling and an accommodation in a cheap hostel, in a tent or even, in warm weather, on the beach or in a park, you can make a beautiful and unforgettable trip!

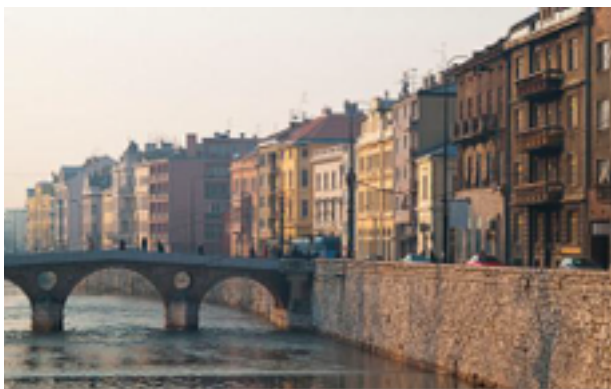
Also if you can't leave the country because of visa-limitations, the road can bring you to some very nice places in Bosnia-Herzegovina which are definitely worth a visit!

DON'T FORGET TO BRING ALL THE DOCUMENTS YOU WERE ASKED TO BRING!

Fun aside, you really really need to bring these documents. Your wellbeing, safety, health and alien existence in this country depends on those papers! No joke.

Also if you're crossing the border by land, make sure you stamp your passport even if you're allowed free access.

HERE'S SOME PHOTOS AND LINKS TO GET YOU EXCITED!



•A super cool video that was actually made for us by our own second-years:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xgeC1N7kTzg>

•UWC Mostar's website <http://uwcmostar.ba>

•An amazing collection of UWC blogs

<http://connorbaer.org/thebloglist/>



This booklet was made possible by members of the Communication and Transparency commission, along with other second-years and resources from our UWC Mostar ancestors.

Thank you all.