Report about my training stay at the Department of Neurobiology, A.I. Virtanen Institute, University of Kuopio, Finland

First of all I would like to thank you for that excellent possibility to spend some time in the laboratory of Professor Asla Pitkänen in Kuopio. All my expectations I have had before the journey have been fulfilled, and I think (at least I hope so) that my stay there was also profitable for them in Kuopio.

I traveled from Prague to Kuopio on 1. August ’08 and returned to Prague on 14. September ’08. Hence, together I spent six weeks in Finland. The principal aim of my stay was to master the technique Stereology, which allows extracting of quantitative information about three-dimensional material from measurements made on planar sections. In neurobiology, it allows to measure particles (e.g. neurons) numbers and density with much higher preciseness than the simple two-dimensional technique. At our department in Prague, we recently purchased some necessary equipment and I also studied the theory of stereology before I traveled to Kuopio. After my arrival to Kuopio I started to perform stereological measurements and learned more details about this technique. I worked under the supervision of Xavier Ekolle Ndode-Ekane, a PhD student who is a stereology expert in the laboratory. He taught me everything I needed. The research I cooperated on was the research of kainate model of epilepsy on knock-out and wild-type mice. More people cooperated on the topic; the principal researcher was Laura Lahtinen and we all worked under supervision of professor Pitkänen.

During those six weeks I was in Kuopio, we had almost finished the laboratory work which had to be done in that topic. At the present, the manuscript of the article, where I will be a coauthor, is in the preparation. After my stay there, I am able to plan, design, perform and evaluate different types of stereological studies on my own. I will use these skills to introduce a routine usage of stereology at our department in Prague. This is the main result and benefit of my stay in Kuopio in Finland.

Except that, I also used the possibility to improve my ability in different immunohistochemical techniques which are in use in lab of Asla Pitkänen; again, some of them we will perform also in Prague.

I was also completely satisfied with all matters of my stay in Kuopio, like e.g. accommodation, food etc. I used the free time I had on some weekends to walk around and see the beautiful nature around Kuopio and to visit the sights in the town.

Altogether, I am sure that my stay in Finland was a great opportunity for me and that it is of significant benefit for my scientific education and career. I would like to thank you very much once more for allowing me that possibility.

With best regards,

Filip Barinka