

Our journey to the frozen North – Taurage, Lithuania

Our Erasmus Plus Program has realized its fifth journey, this time to North Europe, more specific to the snowed Lithuania. On November 27, we flew –over the clouds and the thunders- to Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, through Frankfurt. We met the teams of the other countries which participated in the program and left all together to Taurage, where our Lithuanian friends had organized a big welcome-party for all the missions.

On Monday, November 28, although still tired from the party which had lasted long, we started working. First of all, there was the presentations of the articles –which every school ought to have collected and commented upon. Then we went on with the presentations of the books. In the middle-while, we organized the workshops first by listing the members of each one. So we had: i) MAP Book , ii) Exhibition, iii) Movie, iv) Drama, v) Migration Map.

In the afternoon, we walked through the empty roads of Taurage. It was a very cold day –at least we, the Southern felt so- and Taurage, so peaceful, looked like a ghost-town. Here and there we met some inhabitants of Taurage walking along the lines of the naked trees. At that day, we visited the Town Hall, invited by the Mayor, who welcomed us very warmly and showed us a film presenting Taurage, its history and its economical life.

Next day, November 29, we enjoyed a long excursion. We got up very early and travelled through the snowed roads for about four hours back to Vilnius, the capital of this so different country. Vilnius is an old city with many beautiful buildings dressed in white... Then we went to Traka, maybe the most beautiful town of Lithuania. Truly, it is a medieval village with a big castle which dominates the snowed hills covered by the high pine trees and the frozen lake in front of it. We had lunch in a traditional tavern, after we enjoyed a course of how to make "kibinai", a traditional meat-pie, by a specialist. At the tavern we warmed ourselves and ate the "kibinai" we had prepared before with our own hands.

Wednesday was dedicated to the workshops. From 8.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. we worked at the school. MAPBOOK team prepared the first chapters of the book which showed how our ERASMUS teams had worked and the tasks every country had been occupied with. At the same time the team for the Exhibition –which will be organized in Paris- worked on the diagram of this final exhibition, that will present all the work we have done during the two years of the program. Drama group rehearsed the plays written in Avilla and Movie team did the first scenes of a film, the scenario of which was written by us, the students, also in Avilla. Migration Map team worked on the videos presenting the migrating background of the students.

On Thursday we visited Nida and Klaipeda, where we went to two interesting museums, Thom Mann Museum and Neringa History Museum, and bought tones of souvenirs. We walked along sand dunes of Nida. On Friday, December 2, we presented a first version of the two plays and saw the film. Then we watched a presentation of the since done work of

MAPBook, Migration Maps and the Exhibition. A farewell party was prepared by our Lithuanian friends where we had fun and had the chance to say good bye to each other. After three hours, very late at night, the Greek team left for Vilnius, to catch the flight for Athens from the airport.

The journey was easy and quick and in some hours we found again our home town and our families. This was another so interesting journey of ERASMUS

Evangelia Ploumistou, B3

You can travel with us in Lithuania through this video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qqVy2AU6p3A>

Our students said:

The journey to Lithuania was one the nicest and most important experiences of my life. I had the chance to go abroad for the first time and it was wonderful that I met new people with a very different way of life. I will stay in touch with many fellows abroad. Lithuania is very beautiful, extremely well organized and clean, but it is too cold for us. The hospitality was gorgeous, in spite some arguments we might have and which prove that every people has its own values and habits, and we must learn to deal with them. The workshops were interesting and easy to understand and they helped me to gain the sense of collaboration. I improved my computer skills. I hope some day I may meet the guys from the program and have fun altogether as we had in Lithuania

Maria Strimbel

During the staying in Lithuania I created bounds with many boys and girls of the program. The workshop I participated in (Drama) was quite interesting.

Evangelia Ploumistou

The hospitality was great, generous and kind people. I liked them very much. I also liked the place, so different from Greece. The way we worked was creative and co operational, we worked as a team. We made lots of friends and our participation to the workshops brought us really close.

Nikos Vardonikolakis

The days in Lithuania were amazing. Everybody, teachers and students, were very friendly. I was at the Movie workshop. We prepared a film on the problems of refugees. The experience was great. I was impressed by the professional way we worked all together and I think this will help me in the future. We had great time playing with snow. I hope to visit Lithuania again someday.

Vartui Kassartzian

The experience was great because I learned to organize my ideas and prepare a presentation. I also learned to work as a team.

Verzin Kassartzian

ERASMUS was a very special experience for me. I had the chance to travel abroad and participate to such an interesting program. Lithuania is a very beautiful country with nice and very kind people, who know very well the sense of hospitality. The students and their families did their best to make us feel at home. The work done was quite interesting, effective and fruitful. The program helped me to improve my English, to organize my way of thinking and of course to meet people from other cultures.

Sophia Belegri