

## First meeting in Košice

8 – 15 December 2019

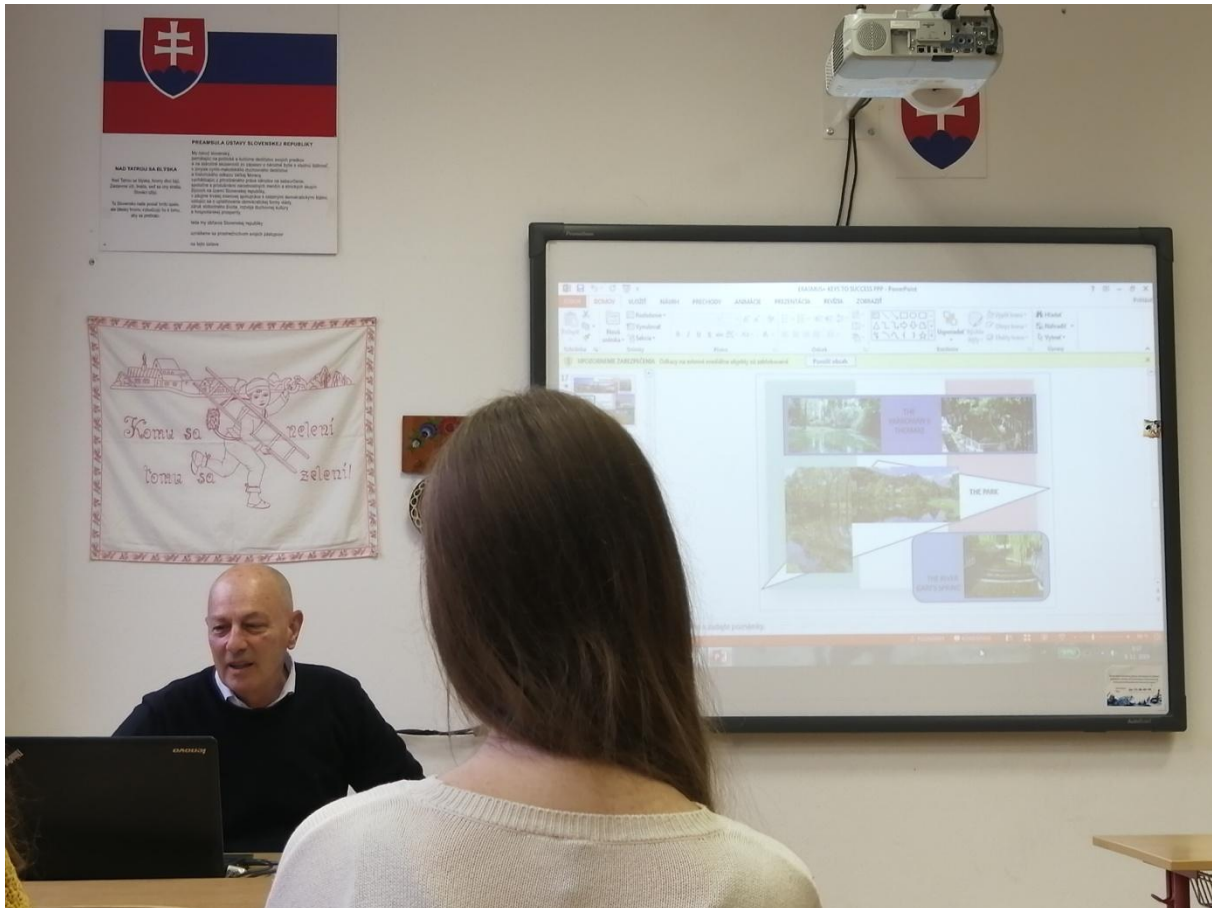
Our project started right in a few months from its beginning, with the first mobility in Košice, Slovakia.

On Day 1, we arrived at the school, where we were officially welcomed by the principal, and we were divided into two teams and taken around the school. We were shown all around the building where they explained us the activities and the type of training carried out in the classes and special labs.



Then the two teams went to separate classrooms, and all three countries had PPT presentations of their schools and towns. Then the Slovaks presented their school and the hotels where the mobility participants were about to go for visits. After the presentations the two teams went to visit the hotels where Slovak students usually carry out their practical training. Team One went to the Yasmin Hotel; Team 2 went to The Double Tree by Hilton Hotel. In the hotels, the staff showed them around the premises, explained the differences between various rooms, the purpose of various

places in the hotels. There the teams went to another training place for lunch and later the teams went to The Congress Hotel Košice, where they were shown around the place and explained the purposes of the halls there.



On the second day we all travelled on a trip to Nestville Park in Hniezdne by bus. There is a Slovak whiskey distillery. We had a tour in English language, first we saw the historic ways of making whisky, then we went through the modern distillery and were explained how whisky is made nowadays. After that we had lunch at their premises and then proper chocolate tasting at a Chocolatier there. We could not only taste 3 kinds of chocolate, but also watch how chocolate products were made in real time, which was fascinating.





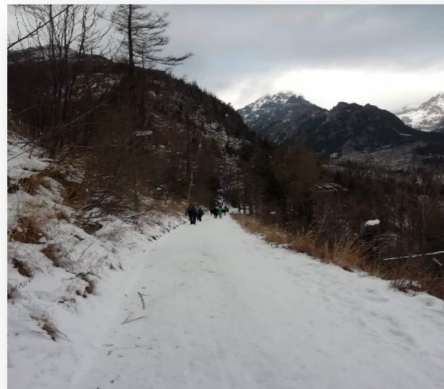
Day 3 was a workshop day at school. Participants were divided into the same teams as on Monday and put into the same rooms. The French, Slovaks and Italians all presented their national cuisines. All students were carefully taking notes while presenting and trying to remember as much as possible.

After the presentations the participants moved to their national teams and were placed in separate rooms. They got 40 minutes to write 10 quiz questions about their national cuisine. But only referring to what they had presented. Then, after lunch, which was served as a buffet offering some of typical Slovak dishes, such as parody, kapustnica, lokše, kyslá kapusta, červená dusená kapusta, slivkové knedlíky etc., the 30 questions were put together and every nationality got 30 minutes to answer all 30 questions in the quiz. Italians won, Slovaks were second, the French were third. The winners got a special present: a little tin espresso mug with the Erasmus+ logo. All the participants got a package of our traditional chocolates, wafers and candies.



On the fourth day, we all travelled on a trip to the High Tatras by bus. We decided to go up to Hrebienok, as a part of the Notre Dame Cathedral had been carved in ice there, and we thought it could be memorable especially for the French. Actually, we enjoyed it as well. After seeing that, we split and part of the participants went for a short hike to the cascades behind Bilikova Chata, the others stayed in the restaurant having tea. Then, we all went for lunch to a typical Slovak restaurant, Furkotka, where the guests could try another Slovak traditional menu.





Day 5 was a workshop day at school again. The participants were again divided into the two teams and put in the same rooms as the days before and we got a copy of the conversation guide. There were common phrases that foreigners can use when in a foreign country to survive. In English, Slovak, Italian and French. We put the students into 3 groups, in every one there were Slovaks, French and Italians. Each group picked one language French, Italian and Slovak and a role-play for different situations. The aim of the game was to make a dialogue in the language picked. But, if Slovak language was picked, the Italians and the French had to prepare the dialogue, Slovaks only taught them to pronounce it and after the presentation they translated the dialogue into English. If Italian language was picked, The Slovaks and the French made the dialogue, the Italians taught them to pronounce it and then translated it into English so that everyone understood and so on. The activity was successfully accomplished, though they were a bit confused, ashamed and needed more time than we had thought. They presented the dialogues, and it was fun. The second activity was aimed at their creativity and knowledge. The participants were put in the national teams and stayed in separate rooms. They got scissors, coloured pens, colour paper, glue and their task was to create a poster presenting their national cuisine. They were not allowed to use anything printed, only the materials given. The official lunch was held at the same place as on Monday. There the principal had a goodbye speech, the French and Italian coordinators as well.









After lunch we all went back to school, where the students presented their posters and all the participants were given the Certificates of Attendance.

Day 6 - we all enjoyed a Tour de Košice sightseeing's in English, as well as the St. Elisabeth's Cathedral, even though the weather was foggy and rainy. We were shown around the most important Košice sights, and were told interesting stories and

legends about them and the persons connected with them.



The meeting was carried out successfully and safely, all the participants enjoyed it a lot and we were happy to see that students could interact with each other easily, though there was a huge language barrier sometimes. This experience gave us a lot of benefits and opened our mind more than it had been before.

Unfortunately, we had found only families to host 6 Italian and 6 French students, the rest of them had to be accommodated at a hotel, under the supervision of all Italian

and French teachers. The families had a chance to experience hosting a person from another culture, speaking a foreign language that they did not understand, a person of different habits, customs, opinions and attitudes. Their task was to take care of that student with love, kindness, tolerance and responsibility, which they did and they represented the Slovak nature as well as they could. They always had us on the phone and could call or text us in any case a problem might have occurred, so both the families and the students were safe. It also happened that the families did not understand the hosted students, because the parents did not speak English, or the participants could not speak English properly. In those cases, Google Translator was of a great help. As for the hosting students, they also had a great experience of having a stranger in their private life, private place, which is sometimes not easy and it certainly requires stepping out of one's comfort zone. But they did very well and at the end of the mobility, they all were unhappy that it had ended.

Our students were shown the places where Slovak students practised, which gave them the opportunity to compare the places where they practised in our home country to those in Slovakia.

The trips to Nestville and the High Tatras were beneficial, too. As the tour in Nestville was with an English commentary, the students practiced their knowledge and understanding of this language. They all made their own coin, which would be a nice memory of this place. But what is more, they saw the whole process of making the first Slovak whiskey, which gave them a chance to compare it to the ways they made drinks in their countries. For our participants, it was a great experience to get to know some of Slovak cultural heritage, as, as they said, they had not heard about any Nestville Distillery before, or about a process of making whiskey in the past. What is more, on the bus, we saw how well the students of all three cultures were getting on with each other. While on Monday, they were suspicious and shy, on Tuesday on the bus the students mixed up and despite the language barrier, they were communicating to each other, regardless of the nationality, they were teaching some words to each other, singing, having fun. So it felt great to see that.

Working in mixed nationality teams during workshops gave the participants a sense of responsibility and self-importance, as they learnt that despite the language barrier, if one wanted, they could solve any issues or come to compromises and succeed as

a group, because they could rely on the individuals. Also, they learnt a lot about the national cuisines of the other nationalities. The aims were met, as the students as well as teachers, learnt a lot of new information about the other regions, dishes, drinks, their cultural heritage and they all practised English as a target language.

So overall, we all consider the first meeting very beneficial for students, teachers and school and we are sure it fulfilled our expectations. We all want to thank all the school staff, especially, the Headmaster Mr Jan Miglec, Martina, Maja and families and students for that hospitality, care and love with which they treated us the whole week.