

Finland 'Erasmus+' Trip:

From the 11th of May until the 18th of May we were participating in the Erasmus+ program which is organized by the European Union. We could go to Kuopio, a not-so-small town in the middle of the Finnish „lake-field“. The teachers in our school choose the students by 3 conditions: if you had good marks, no notice from teachers or from the principal and could speak English quite well, you were chosen out for the trip. 17 children came, 5 from 7th grade, the rest, -just like us-, from the 8th. 4 teachers and the school principal also came.

Now it's almost June already and we got the task to write down our experience. So, that's what I'm going to do!

We gathered at the airport at around half past 4pm because take-off was at 6.50. We landed in Helsinki at about 11. When we finally arrived at the hotel it was almost midnight. We shared a room with my 2 friends and classmates, Dávid and Bálint. I went to bed at half past 2 am.

The next day we had breakfast first at the hotel and then we took the tram into the city-centre. We were let there for an hour. We could go sight-seeing. I think it was great because every group saw different things so we could share our experience with the others. We realized that Helsinki is similar to Budapest, but things are built bigger and it's way cleaner. But the style of the buildings is almost the same, we can say. We have visited one of the train stations, a square with a nice palace and some bigger streets as well.

Then we returned to the hotel to pick up our luggage and went to the northern train station. We could eat lunch there and at around 2pm we took the train to Kuopio. There was a little problem with reaching it, we needed to run because the train didn't come on the track we thought it would...

The train trip took about 4 and a half hours, but it was great. We could sit next to the person we wanted, and the seats were also comfortable, so the trip was enjoyable. The landscapes we saw were beautiful, there were lakes everywhere, and the whole area was a huge forest. At some point we could even see snow, it remained from last week.

At the train station there, we met Henna, who helped to organize this thing. We took the bus from there and arrived at the hotel at around 7pm. The first look at Kuopio was definitely a good impression. The hotel also looked nice. We got dinner there; we ate pasta with an interesting sauce and salad. We were all exhausted due to the big trip so after dinner we stayed at our rooms and rest.

The next day, which was already the third, first we had breakfast. Then we went to a local high school here, in the town as we were on an Erasmus program. I don't say unfortunately, because it was interesting to see the Finnish educational system. It was called Kuopion Klassillinen Lukio. It was so-so different from our school almost in everything. The lobby wasn't even comparable. It had sofas and armchairs, puffs, a billiard table, table tennis-tables and a PS4 as well. We were guided into a classroom, which they use as a resting room. (only puffs and sofas here) On the corridors there were also sofas. We were told that the idea came from the students. They discussed it with the teachers, and they got it. The canteen was quite good, there were more things to choose from. You could eat as much as you wanted. The classrooms were so modern. Students didn't have books or notebooks; everyone had a laptop and they were working on it. But the biggest difference was the „mentality“ of the students. They

took all the responsibility for their studies. Everyone was studying for her or himself and they knew it. They never ever bothered a class, and they made their own timetable. It was interesting to see all this.

We were welcomed with a presentation about the Finnish educational system and the school. Then we held our presentation of our school. Almost everyone (out of the 17 children) was participating in that. Then we got lunch at the canteen and a little Finnish lesson as well.

After school we had a big walk in the city with a guide from school. We visited some old buildings, the theatre, a sports facility and a big cathedral as well. We had a rest on the coast. After that we returned to the hotel. We went to the gym and spent the rest of our afternoon there. Then we had dinner, pasta once again. We had an UNO party as well. We were 14 and played till 11pm. It was great.

The fourth day also started with a big breakfast, then we went to the school. We could join lessons in groups of 3 or 4 children and a teacher. It was a quite colourful experience. At the first lessons they didn't care about us. It was in Finnish and the teacher didn't even explain it to us. But the teacher of the second lesson was so nice, she was talking more to us than to her students... Then we got lunch as well.

After school we visited 2 museums. They were totally different, but both was quite interesting, for me definitely, but I think for the others also. Then we returned to our hotel, and we went to the wellness. It was a big wellness with at least 5 pools and a sauna as well. We had a great time there.

Dinner was pasta once again today. After that we could be outside by the lake and watch the sunset till 11pm. It was beautiful.

Then as we got up it was already Wednesday unfortunately... At school we joint lessons just like yesterday. Our group visited a Spanish lesson. It was great, especially for me because I'm learning Spanish. I was surprised because I could understand almost everything and could do the tasks.

Then after lunch we went on a hike with Henna. She said it was 2 and a half kilometres up and the same distance back, so it wasn't much. On the top of the mountain there is the Puijo-Tower which is at least 40 metres tall. But still, we ran up on the stairs and at the end, back down. The view from the tower was beautiful it was sunny so we could see everything in the area. It was a great experience.

After we reached back to the hotel, we got dinner (pasta again...) and played mini golf. We were seven and had a good time.

The sixth day started with a morning run for me. I think it was only half an hour but first I wanted to see that what are the possibilities. Then breakfast and today we went to another Kuopio school. I don't remember the name of this one. We had 3 lessons. The first was PE far far far from the school. We were playing frisbee-golf there. Then a Finnish lesson. Then lunch and a crafting lesson but they didn't come for us so we „skipped it”. In this school they didn't care about us in all lessons, so it wasn't a good experience... But at least we saw the worse side as well. After school we were let in the city-centre and could walk on our own. Me and the boys went to the Burger King because the canteen lunch wasn't enough for anyone. During our time we saw the KYS hotel, the inspiration of hundreds of MEMs. After we returned to the hotel we went to the wellness and spent the rest of the afternoon there. Then dinner (guess what, pasta today as well) and could be outside by the lake. Today was definitely a different day from the others.

As we got up, we knew that we've reached our last full day in Finland. But I it was a great day. Today, another morning run for me, breakfast and school. Not the one from yesterday. There we could chat with students, join 1 lesson and then we got a presentation about the Finnish culture and history. After school we went a restaurant where we had our „farewell-lunch”. It was nice. After we got back to the

hotel we went to the wellness (to be honest we couldn't have enough of that) and could play billiard and mini golf all evening long. We got pasta for dinner of course...

The eight day was the day of travelling home. We got up at half past 5. We left Kuopio with the 9 am train and travelled 5 hours to Helsinki. It was even better than the trip to Kuopio. But we all knew that our stay here in Finland ends soon... At Helsinki we had lunch, and we went to the airport after that. Our plane took off at around half past 4 so we landed in Hungary at 6pm.

I wasn't happy about coming home yet. I'd be still happy there. But these 8 days (even if it was short) were amazing. I feel very lucky that I was able to go there and experience all these things. And with this, I became the first member of my family who have been to a Scandinavian country!!

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