

STUDENTS' ESSAYS FROM MOBILITIES

Mobility in Czech Republic

My experience in the Czech Republic

Elena Simeonova

As a participant in the “Erasmus+” project “Responsible Travel” I was very excited for the upcoming mobility. I was looking forward to meeting people my age from three other countries and going hiking.

On the first day in Rumburk we got to know a little bit more about Lithuania, Slovenia and the Czech Republic, which was very interesting. Also, having the opportunity to sleep in a student’s house broadened my view on how Czechs live and what they are like. Without a doubt the most important and exciting part of the trip was the adventure. I have always loved nature and more specifically the mountains so I was thrilled to go hiking in the National Park. Despite some difficulties when it came to organization and sometimes communication, I believe, in the end everything was great. The best parts of the trip to the National Park were the first evening when a lot of us gathered around the camp fire and sang, and actually at the end of the trip when everyone was exhausted but extremely satisfied with our success. The next day we made presentations concerning our trip which was quite frustrating but ended up fine. Another great part of the whole experience was the concert of the Czech band “The Pix”. The next and last day everyone went their separate ways to travel back to their countries.

To sum up, during the mobility I was able to put my English and knowledge of the ten principles of RT to use. Travelling to the Czech Republic was a thrilling and different experience which I will remember for the rest of my life.

My trip to the Czech Republic

Violeta Doncheva

When my teacher M. Krasteva told me I would be one of the students who would visit the Czech Republic I didn’t expect such a great fun.

We arrived in Rumburk on Monday evening. The next day we visited the school where we met the other participants in the project. We were divided into groups and planned our trip to Visoka Lipa. Then we went on a tour around the town which is very beautiful and has interesting history. Sleeping in the Czech families was a wonderful opportunity to learn something new about the Czech traditions and customs and test our English language skills. The next day we started our journey. To be honest, when I found out that I had to walk 17 km I was frustrated. But when our group managed to reach the camp first despite the rough terrain I felt extremely proud of myself. Helping in the National Park was really satisfying. One of the best thing was that we managed to follow the 10 principles of RT. Communicating with the other students, seeing breath-taking views, exploring a different culture and simply having fun are the things that I will never forget from my trip to the Czech Republic.

Our trip to the Czech Republic

Danis Lyatifi

At the beginning of the school year our teacher M. Krasteva told us about a project named “Responsible Travel” and that we are one of the four countries-participants in it. She also told us that we had to travel to the Czech Republic and we should be prepared for an unforgettable experience. For me this was an opportunity to learn about the country, its culture and traditions, and even a little bit of its language.

The first day we flew from Sofia to Prague and then travelled to Rumburk by bus. We arrived late and just went to sleep. The next day the Checks showed us the town and their school. Then we were separated in four groups – each with two members from each country. Our task was to organize the trip for the next three days and to buy food for it. In the evening we slept in a Czech family and that was really exciting.

The next three days we spent in the mountains. We slept in tents and travelled to the National Park where we helped the local workers. Every group had to cook their food, which made us communicate in English. Participants from different countries shared about their culture, traditions and music.

After that we spent two more days in Rumburk working on the project.

All in all, we had a great time, made new friends, explored part of the world we had never been to and helped the local people and their economy. All of the time we tried to follow the ten principles of responsible travel and that made us very proud!

Our Trip

Ana Nistorova

When I heard about the project I didn't think it would be that interesting. I met lots of new people and friends.

We visited Rumburk, spent a night in a local family, and learned how to survive on our own. We also learned more about the history of Rumburk and the National park. We practiced our language skills because English was the language to communicate in. we were separated in four groups of eight participants and we worked together as a team, trying to follow strictly the ten principles of responsible travel. We did our trip to Visoka Lipa together as well. We took part in a couple of workshops on different topics and saw how students from the other countries work.

My experience in the Czech Republic

Margarita Hristova

I entered the project because I wanted to meet new people and see new cultures. Although there were some difficulties, we spent a nice time in Rumburk.

The first day of our mobility we went to the school and we were shown the way Czech students live and study. Then we were separated in groups of eight and started planning our Responsible Travel expedition. The whole trip went well although in the beginning the walking was difficult. We arrived at Visoka Lipa and put up our tents.

After two days in the National Park we went back to Rumburk and each group presented their impressions from the workshops and the hiking.

Overall, the experience was amazing. I am glad that I met peers from countries all over Europe. I like the idea of responsible travel! I hope, the other participants will like their trip to Bulgaria, too.

My experience travelling in the Czech Republic

Ivan Ivanov

Travelling in the Czech Republic was one of a kind experience that I would definitely like to repeat if I ever have this opportunity again.

When I was first announced that I would be taking part in an international project I was amazed. I have never been to this part of Europe, neither have I walked so much in the nature before. Travelling wasn't the only great aspect of the trip. I was also able to meet new people from new countries located all around Europe. This gave me the chance to practice my English and also get to know different cultures and their way of thinking.

Overall, the experience was amazing, I definitely enjoyed myself whilst travelling around the country. I've got the opportunity to meet new people, find new friends and, most importantly, apply the 10 principles of RT.

However, the most important part of the project was travelling responsibly. After researching the 10 principles of RT we were able to put them to practice and follow nearly all of them.

Responsible Travel

By Karolina Vesela

From 8th to 14th May the first mobility was held in Rumburk, Czech Republic, my home place. Since the first day when we all met it was clear that the most important thing is communication. In multicultural teams we had to overcome our shyness and get together in a short time while discussing our workshop and planning the pre-expedition. As a member of the Czech team I felt my responsibility as a leader falling heavy on me. So I was very relieved when I found out that communication in English isn't problem for me neither for others. During the whole week I got used to English so much that without me knowing I was later speaking English to my friends or parents.

We started our pre-expedition the second day, on Tuesday. We were enjoying the countryside and so the beautiful weather, which is in the Czech Republic once in a blue moon. It was obvious that physical condition and practical experiences of my teammates were different. But there was no problem on the way, so we got comfortably in our camp although we were the last one. After we arrived and prepared our place for sleepover it seemed like the barriers once broken down during the trip were built up again. We all stayed in groups within our own country and exhausted we were telling our experiences. Later in the night Slovenia joined us around the fireplace as we were trying to sing along with guitar.

The volunteering was very pleasant activity for me. The team work atmosphere at such a nice place as *Dolský mlýn* was relaxing and I had a really good feeling about the job we've done. It got even more interesting later because of Mr. Sojka from the Nation Park *České Švýcarsko* who gave us a really nice talk about history and geography of the countryside there. We've learnt about Czech type of Indians, history of the mill and its surroundings and about returning eagles and salmons into the local nature. Later that day those of us who wanted climbed a nearest rock castle *Šaunštejn* and although we didn't catch the sunset as we intended to the view was still breath-taking.

The last day of our trip we set up early leaving the camp behind. Our way was a bit easier so we took our time to visit a stone chapel in a village that was nearby. After that we followed a different road. As I was trying to find a shortcut path across the cow pasture I missed our road. But I was still keeping us in the right direction so in the end we reached the city with only a single adventure – climbing over fence which as I learnt later was more than welcome. Finally, we stepped in the city square of *Česká Kamenice* here a local concert kept our mood high together with a victorious feeling as our team was the first to arrive.

Friday was a very busy day for me. But after we presented our collective work, I was relaxed enough to enjoy the evening concert of *The Pix* and so our last moments on Saturday's stroll through Rumburk. Meeting people from different countries was a completely new experience for me because of that I found the Responsible Travel principles actually useful. I am really grateful for this opportunity I was given. I will enjoy my stay in Bulgaria and try to learn new things there but mainly I will meet my new friends again.

First mobility: Czech Republic
by Anna Tiefertunková (CZE)

The first mobility was in May (8-14th), this year. We were preparing for the whole week really hard and I think it went pretty well. At first I was really nervous (all of us were, I think), but on the second day it got better, because all of the people there were really cool and kind.

On the very first day we welcomed the Lithuanians. They were a little bit shy at first, but after all they looked pretty cool. Me and my friends didn't welcome the other groups, because they arrived too late.

On Monday we all already met each other and we had the presentations about our countries, which were really nice. I liked the Slovenian presentation, because it was original. On that day was at our school the project „Day of Europe“, so our groups visited some of the countries there. I really liked it and I hope that the rest of our group liked it too. After that we sat in the whole group and we talked about the workshop. We had that company called „Dvikoloratis“, which was a company offering bikes for rent. The name is the composite of the word *bike* in our languages. Then we went for a small walk around the town and we showed some interesting places to our new friends. We also had a lunch at our school canteen, where the foreign students had some of our traditional meals. After lunch we sat together in our groups again and we talked about our route, that we had prepared for the pre-expedition. We also wrote a list with things, that we had to buy for the next three days.

On Tuesday, we went to Česká Kamenice by train, and then our first day of pre-expedition started. The first route was about 12km long, so it wasn't too hard. Most of the route we walked in a forest. We didn't talk much with each other, but that doesn't matter, because the atmosphere in our group was nice. The last part of our route was also the worst part, because of that totally insane stairs, which went to the village Vysoká Lípa. But we made it and we arrived to our camp as the second group. I was so happy to see my other czech friends, because I was so tired of talking in english all day. I also think, that the time we spent in the camp was the best. We had so much fun while the building of tents, playing guitar and we also filmed some really funny videos. In the evening we also tested our cooker, because some of us wanted to make some soup. Me and Eliška, we slept outside just in our sleeping bags, under a sail. In the morning, it was a bit cold, but we still slept well.

Next day, at noon, we went to the Dolský mill, to repair some of the roads there. Even we had to work, it was still fun and we enjoyed it. After that, some of us went to a hill, to see the view from there. The rest of us (including me) went back to the camp. When our whole group was back, we cooked first proper lunch on the cooker. We had a lot of free time in the camp and we really enjoyed it, even it was pretty hot there. We also talked about the second routes with our groups. And in the evening we went to see the sunset, to a viewpoint, but we were late, so we just saw the view from there.

Thursday was the second day of the pre-expedition and I was a bit nervous, because my leg was hurting. At first we went down the insane stairs and we met another group, because part of their route was same as ours. In Jetřichovice, I had to give it up, because my leg was hurting really bad. I was really sad at first, but then my friend said, that she's glad I didn't continue, because the route was sometimes really hard.

On Friday we made our presentations about the workshop and pre-expedition. We also visited the Loreta chapel and we had lunch at our school canteen again. After that we all presented our presentations, which were all really good. Then the foreign student had dinner at their accomodation and we (Czechs) had some time for ourselves. And finally, the best part of the day was a concert of „The Pix“. I think, that all of us enjoyed that day.

Saturday was the very last day of the mobility. We went for a small walk around the town again, but we visited some other places. Then we said our goodbyes, which was a bit sad, because the whole week was so fun and I'll miss it.

I think that the whole week went pretty well and I hope, that all of you enjoyed the week as much, as I did. Can't wait to see you again!

ONE WEEK WITH ERASMUS+

I will start a little bit extraordinary - in the end of the week.

For our friends from Lithuania, Slovenia and Bulgaria was Friday the last day of their week full of adventure and new experiences. For me it was primarily end of stress, pressure and organisation.

We started planning this week a couple months ago. Even that we didn't really know what will happen. On Monday when teachers told us the program it wasn't surprise just for the foreign students, but also for us. At the end of the day I was super tired and also nervous about the next three days.

In the morning I thought that I will never go 15 km with backpack on my back. But everyone felt the same, so we shorted our route. That was good. I thought that I know our route very good, that I know about every little piece on the way. Well, it was almost true but I forgot the last part of our route. We were the whole day on the way and in the last 2 km there were stairs. Really long, steep and exhaustive stairs up. I thought that I will die in these stairs. When we arrived in the camp I was really happy and proud.

The next day we went to Dolský mill to work. It was really fun and we worked hard. After that we went to guided tour around Dolský mill. The nature of Czech Switzerland is for me still really interesting even I live here, so for our foreign friends it was really something. After that we went back to the camping site. Some of us went to one hill, but I was tired and I thought about the next day. But I didn't avoid the walk at all. The teachers wanted to go on the castle rock to watching the sunset. Unfortunately, we went from camp like half an hour after the sunset. So we see a Moon on the way to the castle and on the way back we went in absolutely darkness.

The last day of our "expedition" we went back from camp to the Rumburk, specifically to the bus station in Líška and then by bus to Rumburk. My team mate Anna had a trouble with her leg and she almost couldn't walk so she had to stay in Jetřichovice and went home by bus. So I was alone "route expert" in my group, because even we described our route like thousand times, no one wanted to lead the group or holding the map. We went through the forest when suddenly the route crosses the river but the bridge wasn't there. There was only some wood logs and metal bars. I never was so scared before. Fortunately, everyone crossed the river safe and nobody ended in the water. The last point of our route was the hill Studenec. As the stairs on the first day, the Studenec was also on the last kilometres of our way. In one moment I thought we are in one point of map but then I realized we aren't so I started to panic and I had to thinking about five minutes where we really are. But everyone started to thinking where we are too so then it was really hard to persuaded them about my opinion. In the end I didn't persuade them and I had to plan different route to the bus station. For me it was the hardest moments of our expedition, just to don't get lost and come to the right village and catch the bus. Fortunately, everything worked and we finally arrived to Rumburk.

And now, we are back in Friday. On the beginning of the day I was tired, exhausted and I couldn't think positive and logical. But then I saw how amazing job we did and I realized how adventure we lived and I was happy, proud and couldn't stop smiling.

It was really great week with lot of experiences for me. I will try to learn from them for the next time. I'm looking forward to my next adventure with Erasmus+.

Alžběta Petrášová

First mobility of Erasmus+ was in Czech Republic so in my country.

My Week with foreigners began with apprehension. I will understand them? They will be okay? We lose during our expedition?

Before whole week was long and careful preparations. We had a meeting, we have prepared a program for the whole week, they planned an expedition searching for connections and resolve all the organizational stuff.

The foreigners arrived on Sunday, some of us were welcome when they arrived. I saw them on Monday. First on the program was to classify the expedition teams. In each team there were two Czechs, two Bulgarians, two Slovenians and two Lithuanians. Then was an icebreaker, which prepared for us by our Slovenian colleagues. Followed conduct after school, around the city, within which the poll took place, then we all had lunch in our dining room, we had a typical Czech dishes- „svíčková“, blueberry dumplings. After lunch was presentation of the route and we agreed what we eat during the expedition, we went together to buy the store. We also started working at the workshop.

On Tuesday we met before boarding, where our friends were staying. We split into groups and expeditionary we went, some of us on the train, some on the bus. Our group went Slovenian transit to Doubice and went, as everyone to Krásná Lípa. Before us was a total of 14.5 km long trail, demanding terrain, the first half is all uphill. At the beginning we agreed that we would do a few small breaks. We made only 3 breaks. The only interesting thing on our route were narrow stairs. We walked the whole route in 4 hours and a 30 minutes, so we were the first in the camp. Then we rested, cooked lunch and pitched our tents. In the evening we had the fire and we sang a song. On Wednesday, we stayed in Vysoká Lípa, we did volunteering by Dolský mill, which introduced us to Mr. Juda from the National Park Czech Switzerland. We managed the way to „Dolák“. Everyone got involved and helped. Then we had a brief and very interesting lecture from Mr. Sojka. Then we split up, some of us went back to the camp and another group went to some view in Vysoká Lípa. The evening went on Šaunštejn part.

On Thursday we were returning in groups. No group has not gone the same route.

On Friday we met at 9 at school and in groups we worked on the final presentation of the expedition, from the workshop and from the polls. Lunch was again in the school cafeteria. Afternoon to the presentation itself, and in the evening we had surprise- concert.

On Sunday was valediction. I do not know exactly what happened because I was not there at that time I was on the river.

The whole weekend was great. I think it was an interesting and useful experience. And I'm looking forward to the next mobility.

Extracts from essays by Lithuanian participants

...In the evening we climbed to famous National Park sand stone to see sunset. The next day after breakfast we left our camp and were coming back 15km to the village called Doubice. On that road we saw many unbelievable views, also were hiking to some tops. I was so happy that I had my camera because I took so many beautiful pictures. When we arrived to Rumburk everyone was so tired but also so happy and proud of himself. On Friday every group were showing presentation about expedition and in the evening was concert of local boys band call The PIX. Concert was in classroom but that was amazing and atmosphere on was unbelievable. On the last day we had short walk in city center and after that we left Rumburk. I'm so happy that I'm participating in this project because I get a lot new information about responsible travelling, I met a lot new people and I had amazing and unforgettable experiences. /Gabriela A/

...I was excited to meet people from abroad. The most interesting part about communicating with them was speaking English all the time. Since the project is called Responsible Travel, we had to learn about it more and of course practice later in our expedition. For it to be more fun we got divided into 4 groups: 2 Czechs, 2 Slovenians, 2 Bulgarians and 2 Lithuanians in each. It was a challenge understanding what foreigners mean when sharing ideas and also explaining yours understandably. It was also interesting seeing how different people act in various situations. Especially on the expedition. /Brigida/

...Also, I have spent one night in Czech's family. It was unforgettable. I found out something new about Czech traditions, culture, tried their traditional dishes, had a chance to learn Czech language a little bit and also, improve my English language skills. At the end of our trip, my colleagues, teachers and I visited the capital of Czech Republic - Prague. We did not have enough free time, so we had quickly to look around through the cathedral, the Charles Bridge and other famous places. I took some nice photos of them. Also, I tried traditional Czech's dessert - trdelnik with ice cream. To sum up, I should say it was a great trip and I saw lots of famous sights. Besides, I learnt how to travel responsible and how to find the common language with a team. It was a great opportunity to practise the language and socialise with citizens of Rumburk. When I came back to Vilnius, I was very disappointed that this week passed very quickly. /Gabriela S./

... One week ago, I was in Erasmus+ project, in Rumburg. This amazing project connects students from 4 different countries through time spent together in Rumburg gymnasium, 3 days journey and night at some of students families. Previous week changed one page from my life book. I had a chance to experience some awesome moments in a new environment with new people. So, firstly, I had never thought about that I can communicate with people, whose language has no similar words(actually, English helped us). Also I have never thought that it is amazing feeling to climb up the mountain and to see all view from a height. (it was something new for me) In general, I fell in love with all of this people and I will miss them! In my point there was not enough communication between students, but actually for the firs time it was okey. I hope to meet all of my new friends soon! /Paulina/

MY EXPERIENCE WITH RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL IN CZECH REPUBLIC

When we were preparing for the journey to Czech they present us the responsible traveling. We knew some things already but we didn't know that it's as important for the environment and its habitants as we saw it last week.

I mean the whole experience was amazing. Our expedition led us through the National park Czech Switzerland. We saw so many beautiful and also hidden places, we were walking through the canyon, covered with forest.

Because all the participants were divided into small groups the whole trail was much easier – we were walking faster and we got a chance to know each other a little better. The second day in national park we were already doing some volunteering work. We were preparing forest road for the film makers, which ones are coming this summer. In the end we were really exhausted but some of us still had energy to reach the view point and we didn't regret it.

For me, the best part of the day were evenings. In the beginning just because I was so tired and when I took the shower I was already half asleep. But then because that was one of the rarest free time we had there. One day we went on a long walk around the Rumburk and the other we were hanging out with the Bulgarians. In the camp we made some fire and sang a lot of songs.

I'm glad that they also show us their hometown Rumburk. It is a very small city, also very domestic and historical. We saw the Loretta chapel and we ate the best kebabs that I ever try.

I think that we were following most of the principles of the responsible travelling – we prepared the whole journey; we found new horizons – I even stood on a hill, from where I could see the Poland on one side, the Germany on the second and Czech on the third side. The local culture was respected. I must say that in Praha we tried one of the Czech national deserts, called Trdelnik. I think that we were thinking enough about the environment at the volunteering work and we were supporting the local business by eating in local restaurants. We were avoiding danger as much as it was possible and many times we were all working as a team. I think that we were all part of the group because everybody told their opinion and no one was disadvantaged. The only task that we didn't thought about is cooperating with local people. Maybe next time we should try to communicate a little bit more.

For me this week was a really great experience – we get to know with the other cultures and we had to talk in English the whole time and that was great for practicing the language and using it in real life, we also made some friendships that will thigs up on our next expeditions.

Sara

MY EXPERIENCE WITH RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL IN CZECH REPUBLIC

While we were staying in Czech Republic I really learned so much more what responsible travel is and how it effects locals where we are staying.

I have learned that no matter where we are travelling to, we must plan our activities and everything else that we will be doing there. We have to plan our activities that way that it will bring the best to the people that live there and who are dealing with tourism. And in Czech Republic we have learned this in a very fun way. We had few workshops about responsible tourism and we even went on an expedition to a nearby camp. I think that this expedition made us really think how much our presence meant to the people that were employed in that camp. And I also think that every one of us tried its best to consider the ten rules of the responsible travelling.

Although I have been to Czech Republic once before I was still very excited about going again. I have met so many new people and i found out that although we were all from different counties we have pretty much the same interests and it was just more like meeting few Slovenians rather than Bulgarians, Czechs and Lithuanians.

When we first arrived in Rumburk and when I saw their gymnasium, it instantly reminded me about the Hogwarts, school from the Harry Potter movies. It looked very old but it is nothing wrong with that because I think it's just cool. After our arrival we have accommodated in dorm. Next day after we spent the night in dorm, we had our first activities with our associates from other countries. I have to admit I was quite nervous and excited about that day. But at the very beginning we have played some ice breakers and from that moment on, nobody had problem to speak with a colleague from other country. After that we had just a tour around school and we got to know exactly what will be going on in the week that followed.

The part of our program was staying at Czech families for one night. Me and all the other Slovenian boys went to the same host. Our host was Czech Professor Stanislav Hocko. He, his wife and the whole family were really good hosts. I can say that they were the best hosts that anyone can imagine. We ate very good, we slept good and we just had a great time spending it with Czech family.

For me and for all the Slovenians the expedition part wasn't anything special. We are used to long walks in nature, so like i said it was nothing special from the view of physical strain. But I was Impressed by the views that I have seen on our route. It was just an amazing view that surprised us on every new corner. And it was like every part of our journey was telling as a part of a story about national park. Al those big nude rocks rising from the peeks of the trees. Those scenes really brought a nice memory on Czech Republic.

As a part of our responsible travelling project we helped to fix a road in national park and as a "payment" we got a guided tour around nearby national park. I felt good about helping the people from national park with some voluntary work.

And soon or maybe even too soon the day of saying good bye came. We made some last group photos and wished a farewell.

Aljaž

My experience with responsible travelling in Czech Republic

I was really happy to be chosen to go to the Czech Republic. I have never been there so it was a great opportunity to visit new country and meet not so completely different people. The driving part was quite difficult for me, because I am not used to travelling so long. It took us more than 10 hours with minivan to get there, but we safely made it. When we first came to the city of Rumburk, I did not notice any differences in its infrastructure. It was a simple town, similar to ours. Their school is old, but still very beautiful, I think it is unique and vintage, also interesting to still have the first and original chemistry laboratory, it brought me up the most unbelievable things that could have happened there. Most of people say, that school looks like Hogwarts, the school in Harry Potter films, and it kind of did. Also I was really impressed of Czech students for being so friendly, kind and open people. A lot of them sing or play an instrument and they were not afraid or embarrassed to show us their skills. Most of them speak English very good, so it was easy to communicate. One of the purposes in responsible travelling is staying in local community, so we were settled down in dormitory, just a few blocks away from the school. It was not new for sure. Rooms, halls and bathrooms looked like the ones from the 60s, but it did not bother us. Even more, we felt just like we were in some old movie, exploring secret dusty places. And I sure did not expect the Wifi connection, so I was more than impressed about that. The day I have spent the night in families was amazing. I was staying in this beautiful old weekend house somewhere in the middle of nowhere. My girl who hosted me said her family is simple and they live in a small house in a village, but well, I did not expect the house to be so big. And when she said they own a very small farm in the backyard of their house, with a garden, again I did not expect it to be so huge. When we stepped out to their »little garden«, there was actually a meadow, and everything you could see was theirs. There were a lot of sheep, three white hairy pigs, approximately 80 rabbits in cages, hens, cocks and quails, and not to forget two friendly dogs. And they lived near the woods, so I saw a few deer twice that evening. And I think people in Czech Republic are very hard-working. They work more and gain less money that we do. And because of that, the prices are little lower in the markets.

The whole expedition was great, but nothing new to me, I like long walks in the nature, hiking, climbing and spending the days with friends. After the first day of hiking with heavy backpacks, we set the tents and made a campfire. One Czech student had a guitar with him, but it sounded terribly. So I fixed it and all of a sudden I was the one playing the Ed Sheeran songs next to the campfire and no one was embarrassed to sing along with me. First, the Bulgarians and Lithuanians were listening to their own music, but as soon as they heard the real music playing, they rushed into us and sang along. Although I am used to sleeping in tents, my sleep was not good. It got really cold at night and not even a lot of clothes helped me. But the second night was better, I was all wrapped in the aluminium foil just like a caterpillar in a cocoon.

So the second day of our expedition was not as difficult as I thought it would be. We got a guided tour around the national park Bohemian Switzerland, in which we were staying, and the landscape was magical. We also helped to fix the road, which was near the very famous mill, where a lot of films were made. It required a lot of hard work, but within an hour, we were done. We came back to the camp early so we took a longer rest, that we needed for the next tough day. But 8 hours of walking and climbing the mountains were a piece of cake. We were good physically prepared for new challenges and we were a great team. We really did get along, which is actually rare. We stucked together so nothing could broke us down.

So when we were back in Rumburk, the school organized us a fun night, well I would say a hot night,

because the band of the gymnasium was playing for us, basically three hot boys on the guitar and piano. What a dream!

And then the last and not wanted day at all came. We made last group photos together and then »Bye, bye Czech Republic. See you guys in Bulgaria in autumn.

Karolina, Slovenia

Mobility in Bulgaria

Paulina Senkevica

How the principles of responsible travelling were applied in Bulgaria and why these things are important?

Bulgaria 2016

For the second time four countries (Slovenia, Czech Republic, Bulgaria and Lithuania) got together to follow the responsible travel principles. First time we met in Czech Republic, where we learnt a lot about the principles of responsible travel, so it was easier to adopt to situation this time. Bulgarians had perfectly organized programme of how to use the principles during our stay in Sofia.

On the second day after the arrival we immediately made a revision of ten principles and of course during all the journey in Bulgaria we were using them. We were divided into two groups which later became teams. Also we haven't forgot about the environment and because of that we were using eco bottles and we tried not to leave rubbish after ourselves. Without any doubt, we were following other principles too. We tried local food, each of us was self-sufficient and independent: everyone had their well prepared backpacks. Of course before the journey our trip was well planned and the road was safe.

I'm extremely happy to be a participant of the "Responsible Travelling" project... Partly this project changed my life. One year ago, I knew nothing about the responsible travel and in all, I hadn't been travelling in this way. I got to know something different than a typical journey. I will never regret taking part in this project!

Why the responsible travel is important? Simon Reeve said: "Responsible travel is not only better for our world, it's also more interesting and memorable. Responsible tourism is the future of travel,. So if we want to make our word little bit better, we have to be responsible not only while travelling, but also in our everyday life!

Juliana Saburova

How the principles of responsible travelling were applied in Bulgaria

On 19-26 of September, with some students and teachers from my school – John Paul II gymnasium I had a chance to visit a beautiful city of Sofia, Bulgaria and spend time on the project together with other partner schools from Slovenia and Czech Republic.. These days will stay in my memory for a long time. We met a lot of new and old friends from Bulgaria, Slovenia and Czech Republic. Furthermore, what I really enjoyed, we applied most of responsible travelling principles.

For example, we applied 3rd principle (respect local culture). When we arrived to the capital city of Bulgaria – Sofia, we used local metro. What is more, on the 4th day we used local transport to get to the Vitosha mountain. We tried Bulgarian cuisine(Shopska salata, Banitsa, Kebapche, Musaka etc.) . Bulgarian cuisine was very tasty, so most of us decided to cook it at hometown – Vilnius for our family members.

Secondly, we supported local business. First of all, we were accommodated in local hotel near the city centre. We bought traditional Bulgarian rose soaps and rosewood oils. With respect to Bulgarian cuisine we ate a lot of national Bulgarian dishes on the last day to remember the perfect taste. We also had a chance to buy the products in the local market place to get food with us while trekking in the mountains.

Finally, we raised awareness about responsible travel on different levels. We prepared presentations about our expedition to Vitosha mountain in groups and we spent a lot of time together discussing the plans and the routes for travelling. In conclusion, I hope that everyone learnt something new from this journey about more interesting ways of travelling if you look at this seriously and apply some principles. I am sure I will remember this for a long time and will try to disseminate the information about this mobility and the project in general among our classmates, friends, parents and other people I know.

Mobility in Bulgaria

The second country of „Erasmus+“ project what we have visited was Bulgaria. We were living in the capital of Bulgaria-Sofia. Sofia is really beautiful city because of its old town.

So on the first day in Bulgaria we were learnt to ten principles of responsible traveling to use them on this mobility. On the second day we were preparing for the expedition so we were using some of the principles of Responsible Travelling. Firstly we were buying local products for the trip so we were supporting local business. Although we were following the principle to use local transport because on the third day we were getting by local bus to the first point of our trip. In the evening when we have got to Aleko village (Aleko village was a place where we have stayed for two nights) we were divided in some groups to play sport games so every member of the team was part of. Next day we climbed the Vitosha Mountain, it was not easy so we were drinking a lot of water from the bottles which we

were using many times to protect the environment. Anyway we did it and we were really stunned of the view from this mountain.

Anyway this mobility was really great experience to us because we have made a new friends, have visited a new country and just spent a little bit different it means very cool and unforgettable one week. Saint Augustine said: „The world is a book and whose who do not travel, read only one page” so travel as much as you can!

Karolina Rusecka

How the principles of responsible travelling were applied in Bulgaria

On 19-26 of September, I with several schoolmates and two teachers visited an incredibly beautiful country Bulgaria and its capital Sofia. There we met a lot of new people from Bulgaria, Slovenia and the Czech Republic. During the whole stay we spent a lot of time together when we not just discussed but also tried to apply the principles of responsible travelling. I hope we really succeeded in that!

I believe that one of the most important principles is to respect local culture. Culture makes us unique and different and it helps the nation to survive. First of all, we tasted some ethnic dishes such as banitsa, shopska salad and kebabche. Secondly, we bought traditional souvenirs for our families and friends made by Bulgarian people like rose soap, various sorts of sweets and crafts.

Another important idea we applied was cooperation with local people. I made friends with young Bulgarians who were cheerful and friendly. We chatted about many issues such as their country, their way of living and educational system. They gave us a lot of useful advice as where to have a meal or what to buy. They tried to make our stay as comfortable as possible and I think that they succeeded.

What I liked the most was that we could be a part of a team. Everyone could understand the importance of group's support and trust. We performed various challenging tasks together. Furthermore, we had indoor and outdoor games where we needed to collaborate closely and show our team spirit. But mostly we had a great time all together.

Some people say that travelling broadens your mind. I definitely agree with this statement. What is more, I would say that it opens your heart. Thanks to this trip not only did I visit a lot of places, but I also met a lot of extraordinary people and spent fantastic time in this gorgeous country.

We were in Bulgaria from the 19th to the 25th of September. We had already been to the Czech Republic, but this mobility was a little bit different, because we had to focus on three different principles. Those three principles were: Support local businesses, think about the environment and be part of the group.

On the first day when we arrived we did not do pretty much to have included those three principles. We ate in a local restaurant and that was basically everything. On the next day we were in the school where we ate their traditional food, so we supported local businesses again. Later we played some games where we had to be part of the group. But that was quite hard because we did not know each other well. So I felt a little bit lost. If I had not had Slovenian people near me, I would have felt desperate.

On the following day, the third day, we included all three principles. We met in the school and then we went on a trip around Sofia. Rather than taking a bus or another means of transport, we walked. So we thought about the environment. The whole day we had to be part of the group. We had to stick together all the time. Sofia is quite a big city and it is not good to get lost there. So we were close together all the time. We also supported local businesses a lot. We visited local sights, ate local food. One of my friend bought a souvenir from local people and the other friend gave some money to local musicians. They were really satisfied and they asked us where we came from. They also said that we were very nice. In the evening we bought local food at the market for our expedition. Then, by using the map we walked back to our hotel.

On the day after that, the fourth day we started with our expedition. We met at the nearest hill. Slovenian people went there in our mini bus and the other students in local bus. So we were friendly to environment again. Before we started walking we were divided into two groups: the faster and the slower one. At the end we walked together most of the time. But I still liked that because we walked quite fast and we did not stop every five meters. Our goal that day was to achieve hut Aleko. Some students used a cable car to get to the top and the other hiked. In the evening we played some games and had activities where we really had to be part of the group. I liked those games quite a lot, especially the one where we sat on a chair leaning with bodies to each other, then chairs were removed and we had to stay in position as long as possible. It was fun.

On the next day, the fifth day, we hiked Black Peak. One group took the longer way, the other the shorter one. We had to be part of the group again, because we had to walk in a group. That was hard for me, because the whole group walked slowly and I felt cold all the time because we kept stopping. But it was worth suffering a little bit, because on top of it was really nice. In the afternoon we played some sports games in front of the hut. I did not like them very much. Then, the sixth day was almost the best, because me and my friend were allowed to be our own "group" for two hours and we ran to the top of Black Peak and then caught the others. That was really good because at least I was tired a bit. And on the last day we had to make and give our presentation. We were in groups again.

This trip to Bulgaria was much better than the trip to the Czech Republic. We also had more free time and I liked that. I think we are limited by our principles. We complied with them as much as it was possible. This trip is proof that you can have fun even considering some "rules" that you have to follow.

Vid

WHAT I HAVE LEARNED FROM OUR MOBILITY IN BOLGARIA

Sara Kralj, Slovenia

There are a lot of things that I have learned, really. But I won't be writing about the new friendships that we made or how important is to work as a group or that it is the journey that really counts. I'll be writing about the biggest problem that I was aware of.

My hands were so cold because of the frost. But I had to reach the top of the rocks ... one last step ... one last rock ... one last step up. Suddenly I was standing on the top. The autumn wind was gently blowing. The sun rays warmed my cold cheeks. The view was breath taking, I felt triumphant, I felt free. I was looking down the valley, surrounded by Vitosha mountains and I saw the beauty of the nature. A piece of an unspoilt countryside, which imprinted in my heart.

Looking around, I realized how much we are destroying our home. I couldn't understand why. The earth is a giving planet. It gives us everything we need to survive: fresh water, healthy food, medicine, shelters ... all of that, free of charge. I think that the rise of technology and industry have distanced us superficially from nature. Many centuries ago people knew how to get along with nature, they took only as much as they needed and they were happy. There were no global warming, no ozone holes, no pollution, no desertification problems. Now we are dealing with all of these problems, we're also running out of natural resources, such as fresh water – there are almost 900 million people without drinking water right now, and oil – scientist say that there's not much left, only for another 30 years.

The natural park where we walked for 3 days was really clean. So, I also realized that people actually need warning signs on every 10 meters to save trash, because without them they just left everything behind. The road to Sofia for example was so polluted, there were pills of waste; bags, bottles, glass ... on every corner.

They say that the clearer the goal is the more clearly the path will show up, and they are right. We didn't see the peak of the Cherni vrah through the whole ascent, but we knew that it has to be somewhere above us. I think that this is also an important life lesson. I hope that people will realize that we will come nowhere if we think only about ourselves. I hope that they will realize that our planet is bigger than us and that soon we'll be the ones drawing the short straw.

What I have learned from mobility in Bulgaria

Karolina Mrak, Slovenia

It is such an amazing experience if you get the opportunity to travel around the world. But it is not always so simple to travel responsibly, so we have tried our best. It took us around 12 hours in our minivan to a very beautiful city, the capital of Bulgaria, Sofia. As soon as we got into the rooms of our modest hotel, we rushed out to grab something to eat. It was a dry, not so sunny afternoon, but it was a nice one. In case we would not get lost, two kind Bulgarian girls, who we had already known from the mobility in the Czech Republic, came along with us. Not being prepared for the rainy weather, as you count only one minute down, we became soaking wet, because it started to rain heavily out of nowhere. But by walking fast we still made it to the shopping mall, where we fed our poor and starving stomachs. So the first day was not that bad after all, we just had to blow-dry our shoes and socks through the whole night.

The second day started great. We met in the school and in that very moment that we saw the other guys from other countries, we hugged and were really happy to see each other again. Then, Bulgarian students taught us about their culture and traditional food, but the best of all, they showed us how to write our names in the Cyrillic alphabet. It was quite difficult, but with a little help, we managed to do it. And of course just looking at the pictures of their food was not enough, so they decided to give us their traditional food for lunch. It was not bad, but it sure was different from the food that we are used to.

Sofia seemed like a lovely city to me, so I am sure I can compare it to the city of Ljubljana or Novi Sad, but just by the looks of it. Many of the people may not agree with me, but it is just my opinion. Sofia has some amazing buildings, that you cannot see just everywhere. One of them was a magnificent bright blue cathedral, where I was left speechless. And that was just one of many.

If I focus on the main part of the mobility, the expedition to the Vitosha mountain, I can say I am amazed. It was a really well-prepared trip, especially because it was made for two groups of students, the group of walkers with a normal speed and for the ones who like to have a little more challenging road. And the ones who could not walk the whole road, took a cable car to go to the top. We also climbed the highest part of the Vitosha mountain, the Black Peak. There was a magical landscape where you could see everything. I felt like I was on top of the world.

The food we had on the trip was all bought in the local market, because we did not forget the 10 principles of responsible travelling. Also, time spent together was not wasted. We played a lot of team-building games, card games and one evening we had been showed and taught the Bulgarian dances. And of course, we taught them some Slovenian ones.

The days were passing by really quickly. The weather was on our side, the food was great, what else could we want? Maybe just a few more days together, in nature and away from other responsibilities. Travelling is always a good idea. Even if it is not always free, it is the only thing you buy, which makes you richer.

What I have learned from mobility in Bulgaria

Aljaž Plahuta, Slovenia

During our mobility in Bulgaria we learned a lot of new things about how to treat nature responsibly. But beside that we also learned how to be a part of a group and how to prepare for hiking in the mountains.

Before setting off I was expecting it to be pretty similar to our mobility in the Czech Republic. And my expectations were almost fully fulfilled. All of us had a really great time and a lot of fun.

I was really happy and pleased with almost all our action, because we were all acting really responsibly to the environment. We were all using reusable metal bottles and as many reusable things that we could find. The only thing that bothered me was that we used a lot of plastic cups that could have been easily replaced with re-usable cups.

I think it was really nice from us to go to a local market to buy food. It is one of the rules of responsible travel that says "Support the local businesses" and we really did this. As well as this being good for local people it also gave me a good feeling about doing something nice. We tried our best to buy as many local products as we could. But in the 21st century you just can't avoid going to supermarkets, because they just give us a lot of benefits that you can't miss.

On our mobility we did a lot of things in groups and it was just great. It helped us connect with each other and learn about new countries, people and their way of living. I enjoyed our natural park walk the most.

This mobility was really relaxing and educational at the same time. I enjoyed all activities and I wouldn't change them at all.

Mobility in Lithuania

Essay on Diversity

Physical activity in our lives is very important but it's better when it comes with diversity. Today I would like to talk about how my friends and me spent time actively, participating in the Erasmus+ project "responsible travelling"

A few weeks before the mobility started, me, my English teachers and other project participants were ready to implement various activities we planned the mobility programme in Vilnius for guests from Czech Republic, Bulgaria and Slovenia. On the first day we all took part in volunteering event, which is a popular annual event "Let's do it" or "Darom 2017". We went to the, Pasakų parkas" (a park of fairytales) near our school, where we spent about 3 hours picking the litter and cleaning the branches after winter season. In the afternoon we planned a cityhunt game to introduce our guests to various places around Vilnius, the aim was to show round our old town and famous sites. The following day project participants had an excursion to Kernave – a countryside famous for its history and nature. As a part of national traditions and variety of our cuisine guests could make pancakes at the mill there and learn about the process of making flour. During the mobility programme we had a trip to Moletai, where everyone could communicate with guests from those three countries and improve their own communication and travelling skills, tell about the traditional food and sport in their country or just tell interesting stories. Also, staying in Moletai, we went canoeing and cycling, had a dinner round a fireplace during the evening, it was very delicious. At the end of the programme all project participants had to make short video presentations about time spent in our country.

To sum up, I can say that participating in the Erasmus +project is very active and full of diversity and as we see according to my opinion, we make different important things, which can help us to develop ourselves as a personality and of course help the world to be a better place.

by Rafal Osipovic

Essay on Diversity

As the participant of the Erasmus+ Project, our school hosted guests from Bulgaria, Slovenia and the Czech Republic at the end of April. The topic of our meeting was diversity. Diversity is the fact of many different types of things or people being included in something. Lithuania is a great example of ethnic diversity as it is inhabited not only by Lithuanians, but also by many other ethnic minorities like Poles, Russians, Karaims and others.

Every nation has its own culture. As culture is said to be a vital part of every society, we wanted to introduce our country to our guests. Firstly, we organized the orientation game. The members of different teams had to find the most popular sights of our capital. When they succeeded in reaching their destination, the participants were met by my friends who told them exciting facts about the history of Vilnius. Secondly, we involved our friends from abroad in Lithuanian project "Darom 2017". This event helps to protect our environment and to clean our surroundings. Finally, every country prepared the presentation about their country 's diversity. Paulo Coelho once said "Culture makes people understand each other better". I absolutely agree with these words, because thanks to the project I gained invaluable experience and now I can understand other cultures better.

Dale Carnegie said "You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people, than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you". I am very happy that I made a lot of new friends and we spent a fantastic time all together helping other people to be aware of the important rules while travelling.

By Karolina Rusecka

ESSAY ON DIVERSITY

The 3rd meeting of Responsible Travel participants was held in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania. During previous meetings the students from four different countries became acquainted with each other, so this time the relations between all participants were more easy going. Personally for me, it was nice to meet my friends from Czech Republic, Slovenia and Bulgaria, because in my point of view the Responsible Travel project changed us a lot. To achieve the aim of this project, Lithuanian group prepared a lot of activities, based on 10 principles of responsible travel.

Firstly, on the second day after arrival our guests from other countries had a perfect chance to take part in the volunteering project, „Darom 2017”, that means that they followed the 5th principle of RT. Just to diversify activities in our country, Lithuanian group found a new way to introduce other participant to our city: all together, we were playing the outdoor game. The rules of the game were that students from other countries on their own had to find places, which were marked on the map. The participants from Lithuania were standing on the marked points and waiting for others just to tell interesting facts about Lithuanian monuments. Before the game, every action was planned by Lithuanian group.

Secondly, four teams of eight people from each country were taking part in the trip to Moletai. There, they were following other RT principles. In order not to use inappropriate transport, they were using bicycles, what proves that participants didn't forget about the environment. What's more, they were using only eco bottles and packaging. To respect local culture, teams were making some traditional dishes on their own.

The project of Responsible Travel project is still in progress and the stay in Lithuania was one of the chances for RT participants to improve their knowledge about 10 principles. „Alone we can do so little, but together we can do so much“ Helen Keller said. It means that students from four countries already became a team, which is trying to draw a lot of attention around the responsible travel.

by Paulina Senkevic

Why is diversity important?

Cultural diversity is important because our country, workplaces, and schools increasingly consist of various cultural, racial, and ethnic groups. It can come in many forms: gender, race, religious and sexual orientation. All the above contribute to the individual's unique experience of the world. New perspectives bring people together, so workers with different backgrounds and life experiences generate variety of ideas. Everyone sees a problem in a different way from another one so the multiple interpretations of a certain issue help develop the productivity in dealing with it.

Perspective. It's all about the perspective. When hearing people's experiences, which are not even close to one's past, they provide new perspectives and open new doors towards a brand new and unknown world.

Promoting diversity is the first step not only to tolerating others, but also to the true acceptance of other people's minds. Through communication with people with adventurous past and new unique ideas individual discover that they have more in common than they thought. They may still be remarkably different is of course okay, but exploring differences accelerates the acceptance of one another.

Diversity is colourful! Diversity is fun! Where is the fun if everyone around you was exactly like you? Even in the face of intolerance, discrimination, and violence, we must not forget to spread the word about the importance of diversity and to respond to that violence with a love and a celebration of our differences.

By Andrea

Why Diversity is Important

Stanislava Dimitrova, Bulgaria

Diversity - an essential way to characterise all of humanity. No two people are exactly the same, and although skin colour, gender, sexual orientation, and age are the most common examples of differentiation, these are not the only variables. Experience, interests, favourites, and many more play just as important a role in forming our personality. When put next to the rest of the factors mentioned, we find that people are a strange and complex concoction that cannot be defined by only one of its ingredients; the connections and interactions between them must also be evaluated.

The reason diversity is important is the same as why psychology or any of the other social sciences are - understanding our differences is the key to understanding each other, and even ourselves. The ability to observe and accept what makes us stand out and fit in helps define ourselves - and others, - in the larger context of society, giving a full picture of how we relate to individuals and masses.

Although we may not always like certain characteristics of the people around us, it is important to understand that these differences are what makes them interesting and unique. Moreover, making peace with them will lead us to accepting and being able to live with others better, resulting in a stronger, more united society.

To summarise - one should keep in mind the significance and importance of diversity, for it is an essential part of our species, as well as an essential part of our coexistence.

Why diversity is important?

Diversity is considered to be one of the best ways to come up with new, interesting and useful ideas in whichever sphere you are working. It lets people with different point of views come together and get to know and accept each other. Projects like “Responsible Travel” are a wonderful example for youngsters meeting face to face with different traditions, languages and perspectives.

Firstly, when we arrived in Lithuania we had some adapting problems. Most kids stayed only with their own classmates. At this point, in order to socialize, we had to start searching for something we have in common. It was kind of easy to understand each other’s languages, because of the same origin. It was easier to learn the Lithuanians’ (Poles) way of living as long as they told us a lot about their traditions and history. Activities like playing basketball or table football, sitting by the fire or even making the presentations filled the divide nationalities make and made us feel and work like a team. As if sharing a bungalow or room or even having a late night walk also forced us to become more open about ourselves. We were talking about music, movies or just telling stories. For me this was the moment we did become real friends.

This journey really opened my eyes. I realized that as long as we accept our contrasts and keep searching for things that connect us we can get along no matter what. This is what brought us together after all and is also the reason of the long lasting bond we made with one another.

The conclusion being, it is extremely important to know your country and traditions well, but it is also important to open your mind for the possibilities the others can present.

By Vanissia-Elena Tzarvenkova

Why is diversity important?

It is the subject of our essay, and I think that diversity describes the similarities and differences that people have. With diversity we grow personally and this is what makes us better people, who are more tolerant and accept differences in society. Without diversity, world would be very monotonous, boring, and unimaginably. Earth is such a beautiful planet, and most of us are that lucky, that we can discover it. I had a chance to taste that at mobility in Lithuania with Czech, Bulgarian and Lithuanian - which is actually Polish school. Even if all participants were Slavic, and we all have really big language similarities, we are having enormous diversity too, and I think this is very educative, because we had a chance to get known about each other cultures, which all of them are different and also our natural heritage is also different, but everywhere beautiful. Diversity is also important, because when we travel we start to appreciate our countries qualities, which we at home usually don’t see and are self-evident

Uroš Novič, Gimnazija Franceta Prešerna, Erasmus+

WHY DIVERSITY IS IMPORTANT?

Diversity comes in many forms: gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, age, culture, socioeconomic background, etc. All of these contribute to an individual's unique experience of the world. But the fact that we are so different is so good because no one should be the same as the others.

At our school we have a lot of chances to face diversity, for example with our student exchanges we meet new people, their habits and differences between us. We should be aware of many differences and we should respect them. We should respect what others think, what they look like, what they are.

If you experience diversity in your everyday life, you will have regular exposure to people, cultures, traditions, and practices that are unlike your own. You will learn the skills to communicate and interact with communities and concepts that you are unfamiliar with and gain a worldlier view.

Not only will you enhance your social development, but you will also increase your understanding of the world. This will prepare you to be a part of a global society, whether you are traveling to a new country, working with diverse co-workers, or just reading about events in the news that have heavily impacted a population different than your own.

So I think exchanges in that time are really important and good for us. They help us to rise and grow personally.

Ela Stern, GFP

Why Diversity is Important?

So I was really interested in the theme why diversity is important, that's why I googled something about it. I found two facts that I think are true. First fact why diversity should be important is productivity. If you bring together people from different backgrounds, you get different life experiences. That's why people see a problem from their own view. Second fact which didn't surprised me was richer life experiences. Diversity is colourful. Everybody in the world are different. In the world you can't find a person identical to you. If you travel you have the opportunity to see world in a different light. Every country has their own culture, language, raise, norms, food and so on. But this is the point together we actually make a beautiful world community.

When I was thinking about the diversity I had a thought about technology. Because we are different, we have different ideas and that's why the world keeps moving. Every day we invent something new that's not always a good think, if we don't respect our earth. But I think that people are starting to understand why we should be careful with energy, fuels, air, water and those most important things that we need for our life.

Petra Erjavec, GFP

Mobility in Slovenia

Essay Erasmus+ Slovenia

If I have a shop with my own products and I want to sell it also to tourists, I will probably make a lot of promotion.

There is of course the best promotion - the personally recommendations. It means that I would try to make a good image (quality products and always be nice to the customers) and people would say to each other "Hey I have been there and it's a good shop, so you should go there too."

Then I would give the promotion to some leaflets and guides about my region or country, so when the tourist read about my region, they would also read about me, so they can come to me.

The good examples of that are the two eco-farms where we've been in Slovenia. I don't know about their promotion but when you are there you will definitely buy something just because the good image they make. They make a guided tour through the farm, so you can see, it's really local and they work really hard on it.

I think there are two really important things. Don't regret giving the money into the promotion and be always nice to customers.

Bětka Petrašová

I'm not so sure about this task, but I will try to introduce you mine ideas about it.

How to get known? I really don't know much about promotion, but at the beginning I would start with vicinity - you can promote it to your family, friends. It is really good, because these people are able to promote you the most.

Your attitude has to be positive, people will come back if you will be nice and warm to them. It is good if you will use local materials (for example you have a bakery - you should be buying flour in some local mill - it has benefits that you can get customers from that mill)

So easily cooperate with the others, this will have profits for both of you. (their customers will get to know you/yours will get to know them).

Also you should; be communicative - because you want to make them come back, be helpful - regarding reclaims, purchasing another products, be cheap - prizes of products should be matching to their quality and people really appreciate reachable prizes :) be social - people are spending so much time on social networks, be part of it too (you can show them how you work, who is working etc.)

Don't forget about good conditionals for the place where you will be making and showing (or selling) your products. It should be a place which is available to visit and friendly to spend a great time.

After all. don't pretend- be yourself and everything what you do is unique!

Gabriela Skopalova

This last mobility in Slovenia was mainly about local business and about following the ten principles of responsible travel.

I think that all of us have been following at least some of these principles, for example we were buying food in small local shops every day. We were also planning each day and working in groups. To be honest, at first it was kind of awkward in our group because we had never seen each other before, but after a few days we went along well.

But now back to the local business, I think that the best shops were in Ljubljana because there were so many design shops with handmade product that were so cute! We also visited local markets and events like „Odprta Kuhna “in Ljubljana or „Sladka Istra“in Koper. Sladka Istra was really amazing

because there was a lot of food to taste and the people were also very kind and friendly. One of our tasks was to make an interview with locals about their business, so we talked to a man who has an eco-farm near Bled and he told us a little bit about how the farm works.

From my point of view is the business in Slovenia based primarily on tourism and I think that's also one of the reasons why are the Slovenians so friendly (because they're so used to the tourists). I also noticed that there weren't so many similiar souvenirs shops like in Prague, but there were more original and traditional shops for tourists.

So yeah, I really enjoyed my staying in Slovenia, it was really refreshing. And last but not least I want to say thanks to Slovenians for organizing the whole mobility! Maybe we'll meet again in the future or at least I hope so.

Anna Tieftrunková

How can we connect local business with tourism? Give examples from mobility in Slovenia!

To start up with, in Slovenia we have quite a lot local businesses. If we own local company, we could connect with agency or something like that. We have to make sure that people know something about us and that our products are interesting. It might also help if we are located close to touristic spots and well known places. Location in these days is everything. In Slovenia we have a lot of touristic farms that offers you a place to sleep and they also sell their own products. We went in village named Čadrg and every family owns a farm. they don't go to work, but they sell their own products to the people who visit them. We also visit a farm which offers glamping, this is "where the nature meets modern luxury". If we talk about local business we could mention also the museums for example museums, local people work there and they also have tiny store which sales products that are made in this area. Our capital city Ljubljana also attract a lot of tourists and in the middle of the city we can find well-known stores and popular shops but in between we find tiny local shops with local products and these shops are interesting for tourists because they can see something different and new. /Petra/

The question, "How can we connect local business with tourism", is a question that has been gaining popularity in the recent years, since travelling and tourism became a relevant part of the world's income and economic progress. This question has many answers and every person that is interested in helping the local business in smaller villages, has his own idea and point of view. Everyone has something to say and we should listen more carefully and accept each other's ideas on this topic. I have a few ideas too and would like to share them with you.

My first idea involves the tour guide you are going to use during your trips in the place you are visiting. It is simple in its core, but many people don't realise it. Your tour guide should be a local or at least a person who knows all about the local businesses, where the tour takes place, and inform you about all the possibilities affiliated with the locals' life and trades.

My other idea is about the non – locally supported supermarkets. This thought of mine is fairly impossible to realise but would be insanely effective. Supermarkets should advertise the best local shops, farms, and etc. This is impossible due to the fact that this market needs to sustain itself but I would love to see something like this.

These are not the only ways of dealing with the endlessly arising problem depicted in the title of every other essay required from us for this project. The other essays may have (or may not) have better ideas, but this you will see for yourselves. Let the people know what we are fighting for.

Boris

How can we connect local business with tourism?

Daria Atanasova

Nowadays it is easier than ever to go somewhere abroad, to face the local culture and to deep down in a different lifestyle. The best way to do that is by consuming goods of local production.

During our trip to Slovenia we found out that it is a small country that knows how important the tourism can be for the development of the local business. While we were shopping in the local shops we had the opportunity to connect with local people who told us more about the country and the places which we had to visit in the area. We visited a local restaurant where we had the chance to try typical Slovenian dishes. Our guides show us a local eco - farm which produce everything on its own where we could eat from their food and talk to the owners so we understand how they spends their time and how they make their food. We bought souvenirs from the local craftsmen who helped us to choose the most typical thing for Slovenia.

In conclusion, during the time we spent in Slovenia we understand that when you shop from the local shops and talk to the locals you do not feel so much like a foreigner and face their culture directly.

How can we connect local business with tourism?

Essay by: Andrea Mazgaleva, Bulgaria

Every time we go somewhere out of our place of residence, we immediately become tourists, no matter the of the reason. We explore and learn how to behave like locals, because we use their help to live there. One of the most important principles every tourist must follow is "support local culture and local businesses".

To begin with, when we plan our journey to a particular destination, we could do the following. Check if there are local festivals or fairs nearby and dig some more information about what they will include. For example, when we went to Koper, there was this "Sladka Istria" international festival of desserts and sweet products. There many producers presented their self-made products, such as: honey, cakes, traditional Slovenian cakes, biscuits, etc.

Another possible way to combine the useful with the pleasant when travelling is to visit local markets. In every city, there is at least one market with probably locally produced products. It doesn't cost much trouble, because when exploring the city, you pass by such markets. When we were in Slovenia, in every city we went there were huge markets with local sellers.

It is our own duty to take care of the places we go. Why don't we as well support locals when visiting their homeland?

Lora Manolova

How can we connect local business with tourism?

In recent years' tourism has been an essential part of a country's economy and prosperity, because tourism expresses a country's culture, nature and landmarks. Therefore, a connection can be made between tourism and economy by using business, but not any type of business, more specifically the local one.

Firstly, in order to use the term "local business", one has to evaluate its definition – it is referred to a company providing services or goods to a local community, therefore, it is vital to the well-being of locals.

Secondly, the connection has to be expressed. When tourists visit a foreign country, they emerge in its customs and culture, and most of them wouldn't go to eat in McDonalds, for example, they would prefer to try the national cuisine and visit a traditional restaurant, which is referred to as a local business. That means that tourists fund the business and help it survive.

Furthermore, a local business is also a shop selling traditional souvenirs, often handmade – tourists always bring something from their trip home – either a gift to a friend or simply a personal memory. Therefore, visitors are the main buyers and keep the business going. A good example of such a shop is "Babushka", located in the centre of Ljubljana, which we visited on our last mobility.

To conclude, local business and tourism definitely go hand in hand as we, the participants in the Responsible Travel project were able to observe in Slovenia.

How can we connect local business with tourism?

Atina Shalamanova, Bulgaria

In this essay I will put forward ways that we can connect local business with tourism that we used during our mobility trip in Slovenia.

From our first meal to our last we only ate in local cafes. We never shopped from any big food chains. This is a great way not only to support local business but also to try local cuisine which according to me is very important when visiting a country. We visited a local eco - farm where we got the opportunity to try homemade products. Also we went to a dessert festival where we tried local desserts and again supported the local business.

Secondly we only used trains or local buses when travelling from city to city. Some of the participants went rafting in Soca valley and others went to the lake in Bled and hired canoes when we stayed with the families of the kids from Slovenia. These are another examples of supporting the local business.

Finally we bought souvenirs from local shops for our friends and families (which by the way they very much liked).

In conclusion I would like to say that there are many other ways to support the local business through tourism. The ones that I have mentioned above like shopping from local shops and travelling with local or public transport are only a few of the ways we can do it.