

# YES Estonia



Erasmus + is back

I couldn't believe it; real Erasmus + Mobilities were back. After the lockdown and all the situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic we had held some virtual mobilities, developing our activities with our partners from YES! online. It was cool to see them again and work with them.... But it's not the real thing, so we were really looking forward to having real mobilities again, and that happened between the 17th and 22nd of November when we travelled to Kuressaare, in Estonia.

As soon as we got in the airport in Tenerife with our students I remembered WHY I had missed it so much. We were about to begin one of those amazing adventures that only happen in Erasmus + mobilities, getting to know fascinating new people, cultures and places, having the chance to prove ourselves that we can communicate in English from people all over Europe and especially, learning from all of them. You could see excitement in students' faces but also on us, teachers' after two years.

All the activities were so carefully planned and were so meaningful that I'm sure we will never forget what we learned thanks to our wonderful hosts in Kuressaare Ametikool... From the opening ice-breaking activities and the fantastic school tour (made into a really fun treasure hunt) we moved to the great presentations of the products and tasks designed by all partners... There we learnt a lot on the European Union origins, the voting and representation systems, some of the most important challenges that the EU is facing or will face in a near future. If one of the main goals of our project is to define the profile of an "ideal" European citizen, now I feel we are really closer to achieving that goal. And among us we had some examples, among our students. We all could see it thanks to the amazing ideas that came out during the debate held in teams after the presentations. There they tackled issues like immigration, e-voting or the creation of a European army. We teachers witnessed jaw-dropping enriching debates and played the difficult role of a jury. All of us won there...

Our students also elaborated the puzzle pieces and a brochure on a couple of really interesting workshops trying to summarise all the stuff they had learnt in those activities. We visited the castle in Kuressaare, but again we enjoyed a great (but exhausting - I realised I'm not in a very good physical shape) treasure hunt learning a lot about the castle itself and Estonian literature and history. I will always remember our group dinner that evening... not only because of the tasty food we enjoyed but especially seeing how students from all nationalities had fun together with the games proposed by their Croatian mates.

And that atmosphere and enriching exchange went on for the next days, getting to know the most important sites in the island of Saremaa: their typical windmills, the crater created long time ago by a meteorite, their national parks. Finally Sunday... waking up early to travel by bus and Ferry to Tallin. Really special day... I guess it's not everyday and everywhere that you have a national parliament opened for a group of schools. But it happened in Tallin, and we had an incredible host in the person of Urve Tiidus, member of parliament and former Culture Minister. She gave

students and amazing talk on the importance of democracy and how é-voting and e-citizenship have become essential in Estonia. Our farewell was a fascinating tour in Old Tallin (in the middle of the snow!).

I don't want just to describe our activities and adventures in Estonia and how we enjoyed meeting the people from all the delegations. This mobility was really special not only because it meant going back to real life... it was special thanks to a bunch of (crazy-responsible-brilliant) students that made this mobility unforgettable. As I told you, I have learnt a lot from you "Iceman" Stefan, "it's not that cold" Fede, "granny" Binny and "masters of punctuality" Candela and Laura. And last but not least my colleagues, Ofelia and Cathaysa, two examples of professionalism, empathy and reliability... I would go with these 7 on a mobility again right now... anywhere.

P.S. I would not like to end up this without mentioning how everyone participating in this mobility followed all the rules agreed within our YES project against COVID-19; thank you everyone for being so responsible and respectful!

