

Meeting in Latvia
17th November 2013- 21st November 2013

SUNDAY 17th November

This day was for arrivals at Rezekne. One part of the group arrived at more or less the same time so they went by train together meeting a very friendly and helpful ticket inspector lady.

MONDAY 18th November

After breakfast we went to school (Polish National Gymnasium in Rezekne). The students welcomed us very warmly and handed us some flags and leaflets. Later we were invited to have a cup of coffee and we could get to know each other and break the ice.

Then we moved to a classroom where we were able to work on our project. At first, teachers from a Latvian team were introduced to us and partner countries exchanged with small gifts. Later, an interactive board was in use- each partner country had a presentation about its school, its location, its realized projects, its educational offer and a photo gallery of employees, students and classrooms.

At the same time, Latvian school had the delegation from Częstochowa from Poland, including Mr Edward Staniowski – the President of Polish Choir and Orchestra Association and the sponsor of Latvian Gymnasium.

Mrs Valentina Szydewska- a headmaster of the school showed us the premises of the school, told us about its history, mission, and its which was crucial in promoting Polish traditions in a Latvian land. It turned out that around 300 Polish families live in Rezekne.

Host Gymnasium was founded 20 years ago and it was an initiative of Polish government to satisfy needs of the local minority. At present 58% of students come from Polish families.

We finished our walk around school with a photo in front of the building.

After strolling and getting to know the whole school we came back to the classroom where we continued our presentations concerning the system of education, its phases, the age of students at each phase, grading scale, rules of passing national exams, educational possibilities, educational levels of our societies, numbers of respective schools. Above all, we saw that our educational systems are very similar. During the presentations a lot of interesting questions found very interesting answers. The presentations were displayed by Latvian representatives (a schoolgirl), Bulgarian (Goritsa), Polish (Monika) and Turkey (Talha).

After fruitful work we went for dinner at the hotel. We could buy delicious dishes, try local cuisine, and gathered more strength for the rest of the day.

On Monday Latvian people celebrated Independence Day so we went to the main square. Together with students we marched in the "independence chain of light" to the Mary Monument which is a symbol of independence, tradition and faith. We could hear a Latvian national anthem and patriotic songs, and we could see honorable salvo of fireworks.

The next step was a walk to Gros- Cultural complex. We could delight with beautiful music of Latvian choir. They prepared that marvelous concert together with Russian, Ukrainian, Polish minority groups.

During that annual event, that mayor of the city, honored next prominent resident of Rezekne. Finally, the headmaster Mrs Valentina invited us to the refreshment room for special guests because she was one of the honorable residents.

TUESDAY 19th November

After breakfast we went on foot to school because it was an ordinary school day and we could meet students and teachers.

We kept on presenting our multimedia works about educational systems. Following delegates showed their presentations- Hungary (Eva), Estonia (Signe) and Romania (Dimitir).

Goritsa after all presentations started to discuss the project. She outlined and explained the tasks, she highlighted the importance of effective communication and using IT technologies in our project.

We discussed every task and assigned a coordinator for a given task and deadline.

TASK	DISCUSSION RESULTS AND REALIZATION	COORDINATOR	DEADLINE
Teachers involved in the project make research studies on legends and myths for local places. Lists of sources – all the teachers know topics and themes in advance, for guiding pupils effectively.	Two legends in a native language of a partner country (1-2 sheets of paper)	Eva / Hungary	25th of November
Local planning according to the indications of the project meeting Discuss children's ideas about the project Dissemination actions (Comenius Corner, local press, website) about the events of the first project meeting (native language and English)	Filming or taking photos to record students` work on the project	Signe/ Estonia	30th of November
Introduce the project in all schools. Inform pupils, parents and local communities.	Suggestions included: - articles - interviews - local media - photos Each partner can choose the most suitable solution Articles scans, films links,	Signe / Estonia	30th of November

	photo must be sent over to the coordinator		
Set up Comenius Corners (Bulletin Boards) (native language and English), publishing first introductions in local press.	Preparing/ improving Comenius Corner at school which informs about partner schools Sending photos to the coordinator	Constantine / Romania	2th of December
Preparing eTwinning website / or Moodle / or Think.com portal for effective communication, ongoing evaluation and dissemination. Introducing partners to each other through common web site. Pupils make initial introductory contact with fellow pupils.	Moodel Registering all coordinators, adding them to a group for better dissemination of the project	Constantine/ Romania	As soon as possible
	Facebook Creating a new group, adding all coordinators for better dissemination of the project		
	eTwinning Registering all participants on the platform, adding them to the project for better materials sharring and work within TwinSpace	Goritsa and Signe/Latvia	
Students are looking for information for folk costumes. They visit libraries and write down the information	Goritsa also suggested visiting ethnographic museums Monika suggested creating a calendar which includes pictures of female and male folk costumes from each partner country. Each partner country will send 10 pictures to this calendar (female, male folk costumes together with pictures of students working on the project in the libraries) Dimitir suggested English version for description of these pictures but Goritsa explained that it could be done later in the project.	Monika / Poland	10 th of December
Extra activities	Signe suggested having National Costume Day at schools Due to code dress in Turkey, suggestion for this party was April	Each coordinator	2nd week of April

Meeting with the representative of a local museum or elderly people who will tell them about these places.	Sending over photos, short films which documents done tasks	Goritsa / Bulgaria	5th of January
Translation in English of the chosen information.	Each partner country will translate description of 2 costumes (female, male)	Eva / Hungary	14th of January
Making Power Point presentations about costumes.	Presentation up to 15 slides, incorporating pictures of not too big size, so to be able to post them on the Internet (up to 20 MB)	Olga / Latvia	15th of January
Making small models of dolls wearing folk costumes or making drawings of the costumes.	Emilia Yordanova suggested creating 2 dolls- one for National Agency Partner schools agreed to have this doll painted or sketched (one female, one male) Drawings will be scanned and sent to the coordinator- he will prepare the tree and send a ready painting to partner schools - they will hang it in the Comenius Corner It is a good idea to have Open Day at school to show project effects to local community	Talha/ Turkey	16 th of January

After the coffee break there was a presentation of the country made in English by our host school students. Their presentation discussed the Latgale region, Latvian symbols, the most important cities and monuments and it also showed the beauty of this country. Mrs Organowa thanked the students for their performance, wished them success and invited them to our schools on behalf of all the partners.

Then we proceeded to discuss the tasks related to the project and the appointment of coordinators for each work.

TASK	DISCUSSION RESULTS AND REALIZATION	COORDINATOR	DEADLINE
Exchanging information with the partners.	It was determined that the materials will be posted on the eTwinning portals, Moodle and Facebook on a regular basis	As above	On a regular basis

<p>Flash meeting with the partners and discussing what is common and different in the selected costumes and what is the most interesting in the them.</p>	<p>Talha proposed to use ooVoo application. Therefore, in January the term of the conference will be specified. As Goritsa noted, it is important to remember about shooting pictures from the event to document realization of the task to the agency.</p>	<p>Talha and Goritsa</p>	<p>Details of the conference will be established in the first week of January.</p>
<p>Writing of essays/ story. Students should choose 1women and one mew costume and by imagination and creativity to "embroider" /write/ essays /story about the eternal values in them.</p>	<p>Students have the task to write an essay about an item or folk costume's piece's symbolism in English (one essay in the country where students can write one together or each separately). Then coordinators will send the work to document the implementation of the next step.</p>	<p>Constantine / Romania</p>	<p>20th of January</p>
<p>Publishing all the materials on the project web site</p>	<p>The practical use of so many websites was discussed – time required for their completion, the issue of coordination of the information posted, etc.</p> <p>Talha has proposed creating a project's website, but without bookmarks – only one page which contains links to pages created earlier on the Moodle platform, eTwinning, Facebook and the links to the homepages of the partner schools in order to avoid duplication of information in network.</p> <p>Therefore, Talha offered to create the main website of the project.</p>	<p>Talha/ Turkey</p>	<p>Before 2nd meeting</p>

<p>Introduce the results from the project from the first phase in all schools. Inform pupils, parents and local communities.</p>	<p>Everyone gave possibilities of presenting of project results to a broader range of people for example by :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comenius corner; • Exhibitions at school; • Interviews and articles in the media; • Sharing good practices <p>Goritsa reminded that it is important that all the activities are documented at least with a photo gallery.</p>	<p>Each coordinator in a partner country</p>	<p>25th of January</p>
<p>Making exhibition with pictures from with costumes, pictures from the Flash meeting, articles in local press, texts of the songs in native language and English too.</p>	<p>Albums will be created on the websites.</p>	<p>Monika / Poland – pictures' completion on eTwinning platform.</p>	<p>25th of January</p>
<p>Teachers involved in the project make research studies on songs from the local places. Lists of sources – all the teachers know topics themes in advance, for guiding pupils effectively.</p>	<p>Each country (with the students) is obliged to search for texts of folk songs of the region or country and to choose 2 or 3 from among them. Next, the texts of these songs in the national language should be sent to the task's coordinator.</p>	<p>Everyone Goritsa/ Bulgarian will be collect all of them</p>	<p>30th of January</p>

Goritsa and Signe will be responsible for eTwinning materials –legends, pictures from libraries etc.

After the session, the assignment of jobs and fixing deadlines for their implementation, we proceeded to the presentation of proposals for logo design made by students of partner schools. Goritsa asked to choose from prepared work for the presentation of two from each country. Presentation of ideas combined with a discussion of work completed project work that day.

Then we were invited to play on the occasion of Polish and Latvian Independence Day connected with the reception of delegation from Czestochowa. After the show we went to Town Hall to meet the local authorities. Due to the absence of the mayor, his deputy welcomed us. Poland and Bulgaria handed out gifts from their countries and then we took a commemorative photo.

The day ended with integration dinner in a secluded cottage where Latvian hosts provided us with many attractions and live folk music.

WEDNESDAY 20-11

We started the day with a guided tour of the city. We were presented the most important points and tourist attractions, legends were told and we were allowed to view the city skyline from the roof of the hotel. Next, we went to school to warm up with coffee and start a discussion about the logo.

During the discussion Mrs Emilia Yordanova suggested that the abbreviation of the project's title would affect visibility of the topic in small versions such as graphic logos used for example in the documentation. Monika and Talha indicated that students had a problem with the invention of the abbreviation.

Goritsa proposed a method of voting which ultimately has been slightly modified after the debate and assumed that each group (the national team) vote on one logo design. Printed designs have been numbered and posted on the screen giving the opportunity to the participants to compare them with each other and make a decision. By majority of votes the logo design was selected from among the proposals of Latvia (logo 2)

Another aspect was to identify and discuss further mobility.

The next issue was to establish and discuss the next meeting. It was decided that the Romanian school is going to be visited between 23rd and 27th February 2014 according to the plan:

23rd February – arrival

24th-25th February – project work days

26th – additional activities/ a trip

27th – departure

In order to make the transfer of the students in families easier it was decided that no more than 5 or 6 students aged 15-19 will be taken for each mobility.

The Romanian team informed that they have a dormitory for 40 people and proposed that the guests will be placed there (the night and breakfast is free). The reason for that are legal and organizational problems connected with placing the students in families. Boys and girls will be located in separate rooms.

The majority of the participants agreed that living with families is better for the students because of their integration, contact with culture and language development (Goritsa, Eva, Monika, Talha). It was pointed out that there is the necessity to assure a separate program for the students while the teachers will be discussing aspects of the project.

Goritsa said that abbreviation of the name will be discussed during the meeting in Romania.

The next issue considered platforms. Firstly, Constantine and Paul presented the way of working of moodle platform showing how to log in, choose the school and enroll in the project. It was decided that if the platform is visited, we will develop it, if not, we will resign from it and stay with Facebook and eTwinning. Because of the fact that the chosen logo was designed by the student from the school we visited we were introduced to its author – Valeria – after the presentation of the moodle platform.

After the congratulations to Valeria Goritsa and Signe presented eTwinning platform. They showed how to log in and invite students. Then they showed TwinSpace and its possibilities. They also presented the earlier prepared folders for each country where we are going to put information about our schools and activities.

Emilia Yordanova pointed out an important issue of making the photos smaller before placing them on eTwinning platform because of limits of transfer (there is a risk that with big files we will be short of space quickly). After the session and the discussion an evaluation of the meeting took place. Each participant filled in an anonymous questionnaire connected with content-related and organizational evaluation.

The project part was ended by the head teacher Valentina Szydłowska who thanked us for the participation and told about her impressions connected with the stay of the guest in her school. She said that she hopes that the certificates will prove us that we work in the project wholeheartedly. Then together with Olga and Goritsa they distributed the certificates to each participants. At the end the Turkish team gave Ms Szydłowska a gift which will protect her school from evil occurrences. The rest of the participants received similar gifts.

After the dinner we took part in the ceremony during which first grade students became officially the students of the school. The pupils vowed, placed their fingerprints in the school chronicle and, together with us, watched performances of their older schoolmates. The head teacher of the Polish school – Damian Janowicz – wished the first graders tens on behalf of him and all of the guests.

After the vows the Comenius group went to a potter's workplace located outside the town. We had a chance to see how the dishes are made and how the kiln looks like. What is more, we could see that it isn't so difficult. As the potter said – "the first five years are the most difficult". We had a possibility to buy souvenirs in a nearby shop where ready works are kept. In the evening we met on supper enjoying one another's company and trying to delay the time of our parting since it was the last day of our stay.

THURSDAY 21st November

The day of the departure. According to the schedule each group left different times – some of them together, some separately.