



Erasmus+, Strategic Partnership



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Zalesie Górne

Poland

On behalf of the Erasmus+ project, KA2, Strategic Partnerships/Exchanges of Good Practices, *Realfooding Challenge*, the third short-term exchange of students was held from 03rd to 09th April in Zalesie Górne, in Poland. Several teachers and students from our school as well as from the hosting school *Szkoła Podstawowa im. Wspólnej Europy w Zalesiu Górnym* in Zalesie Górne, from *Mazsalacas vidusskola*, in Mazsalaca, Latvia, from *IES Virgen del Rosario*, in Benacazón, Spain and from *Pohjankartanon Yläaste, Oulun kaupunki* in Oulu, Finland took part in it. However, it must be stated that no students from the Finnish and Spanish schools could participate in this meeting due to restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic and to the war going on in Ukraine.

On the first day, we were kindly welcomed by the school headmistress. Afterwards, we were nicely granted a welcoming ceremony in which Polish students sang several Polish songs as well as one in Latvian and even one in Portuguese! Then a teacher of Music and a student graciously performed a dance. Following these activities, we were taken around the school to get to know its premises. After some icebreaking activities, there were presentations about the schools, the towns/cities where they are situated and also about the countries, after which all the countries presented videos about traditional and healthy dishes. These videos showed grandparents making them or, in some cases, the students themselves made them, mentioning, though, that their grandparents had passed the recipes away to them, thus reinforcing their traditional characteristics. Yet on this same day, all the students took part in workshops so that they could learn how to make healthy sweets without sugar.

On the following day, putting into practice one of this project mottoes, *a healthy lifestyle*, the students took part in pinfuvote and ultimate games. Then we visited Piaseczno, which, along centuries, has been destroyed many times due to several wars. In the 17th century, during the Swedish invasion, to name just one, it was totally destroyed, but in the 6 years of WWII, quite surprisingly, it wasn't. In this town's neighbourhood, more precisely in Powsin, we visited the interesting *Botanical Garden*, where we could appreciate a wide range of plants, many of which are being used in scientific researches in the area of environmental preservation. After lunch, we got to know the town Konstancin.

On Wednesday, we had a guided tour in the capital of the country, Warsaw, which allowed us to know its *Old Town*. Quite astonishingly, the city was genuinely rebuilt after the Second World War thanks to the Polish people's goodwill and high sense of patriotism. In fact, the city was totally devastated by the harsh bombardments and air raids during this war and so it's quite pleasantly surprising that nowadays the *Old Town* keeps its ancient traits due to that reconstruction effort and sensitivity of the Polish. Fryderyk Franciszek Szopen (1810-1849) was born in Poland (his mother was Polish and his father was French) but, at the age of 20, he moved to Paris where he settled down. He decided to adapt his Polish name and surname to the French language – Frédéric François Chopin, for which he became famous worldwide. In Warsaw, in the *Lazienki Royal Park*, the monument in his honour stands out. Every Sunday, from May to September, anyone can take the most of the *Chopin Concerts*, in which the main pianists from all over the world play his wonderful musical pieces. They take place right next to that monument. Moreover, all around it, there are benches with buttons and, if you like, you just have to press any of them to listen to his most iconic amazing piano pieces. Quite charming and certainly a blessing to your hearing sensitivity!

The next day was taken up to visit the castle of the Masovian Princes in Czersk. It was built in the 14th century. In 1656, during the war with Sweden, it was partially destroyed. A hundred years later, it was rebuilt. Then, under the Prussians, the defensive walls were demolished, thus reducing the fortress military importance. Nowadays only three towers, one of which is used as the main entrance gate, can be visited. It is quite interesting to stand out the importance of Bona Maria Sforza, an Italian aristocratic lady, who, in 1518, got married to the Polish king Sigmund I. She made the Polish *cuisine* healthier by taking several vegetables to Poland and making them known – *Włoszczyzna* – vegetables for making soup... Queen Bona, in her time, promoted the plantation of orchards and vineyards in Poland. Then, in Konary, we also visited an apple juice

factory, where, apart from becoming aware of the manufacturing process, we also had the chance to taste the natural and tasty apple juice. All of it in the framework of *realfooding/a healthy lifestyle...*

On the last day, both students and teachers alike got enthusiastically committed to making *marzannas*, in honour of a farewell tradition to winter and welcoming wishes to spring. Then, we took a long walk to *Zimne Doly* and, after a field lesson in *Chojnów Landscape Park*, the *marzannas* made by all the countries were burnt in a big bonfire, thus giving way to brighter spring days!

This meeting was a great experience not only to the participating students but to all the teachers as well. Everyone got involved in it in a very friendly way. Surely it is a lifelong and unforgettable experience for which we are very thankful to the Polish team teachers and students as well as to the families that hosted our students in a very kind way.