



Erasmus+, KA2, Strategic Partnerships, KA2, “Young Entrepreneurs – Learning By Experience”

TPM (Transnational Project Meeting) in Tamsalu, Estonia

On account of the Erasmus+, KA2 project, *Young Entrepreneurs – Learning by Experience*, a *TPM* took place in Tamsalu, Estonia, from 29th June to 4th July 2018.

Taking full advantage of a six-hour layover in Frankfurt, we got out of the airport and strolled along the financial centre of the city, where we came across several bank institutions among which the ECB (European Central Bank).

Once limestone has been and still is an important raw material in the eastern part of Estonia, as well as in others, on the first day, in Porkuni, we visited the *Limestone Museum*, where we could appreciate several types of this rock (also an example of a Portuguese one) as well as many pieces with various kinds of marine fossils carved on them, such as trilobites and ammonites, animals that 370 million years ago used to live in the deep ocean waters of the Baltic sea. Afterwards, we visited another region, where, in the 19th century, a thriving business was set up: in big kilns (round furnaces), limestone was burnt to make lime. It then began to be thoroughly used in the building industry. In the 20th century, this industrial complex was shut down. However, at present, there are flourishing limestone companies in other regions of the country.

Along this year, the Estonians have been commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Estonian Republic. On behalf of it, 100 oak trees were planted in a huge park and around each tree there's a proverb that portrays their environmental awareness and consequently their unquestionable respect for Nature.

On the same day, we were taken to a recently inaugurated big school that is attended by students with Special Educational Needs.

The visit to *Oruveski* was somehow related to the concept of “future entrepreneurship”. We also got to know its varied handicrafts.

The guided tour in the *Rakvere* castle, which dates back to the 14th century, was historically clarifying because everyone learnt how people lived there back then. The show of several soldiers dressed in medieval costumes and carrying long and heavy swords and wooden sticks was very interesting. We also learnt how powder was made. All of us could be, for a little time, blacksmiths: we minted coins with the castle coat of arms and then we could bring them home. We also joyfully tried another activity which was throwing arrows with bows. Quite amusing!

On another day, we visited Käsmu. We were kindly guided in the *Käsmu Merekod Tegutses Selles, Majas, Aastatel*, a maritime school. We were informed about the economic importance of Käsmu in the shipbuilding, shipowning, and salt/fish trade in the 20th century. Along the fifty years of the Soviet domination, for obvious reasons, the sailors of this town were the only ones that knew the huge differences, in social and economic terms, between the United Kingdom/the USA and the Soviet Union because they naturally came across them as a consequence of their trading activities. At present, in the winter time the dwellers of Käsmu are just 60, but in the summer time, it is inhabited by 2000 holiday makers (Estonians and foreign tourists) due to its charming bay and to its natural beauty and peacefulness.

The three manor houses we visited – *Palmse, Sagadi* and *Vihula* caught our attention. The area where *Pamse* is situated covers 11,000 hectares. In the 18th century, Carl Magnus von der Pahlen, one of the German *Palmse*'s landlords, was quite a prominent politician and general. Among all the beautiful pieces of china and furniture, one really stands out: an *orchestriola*, which, in its time, was quite a novelty and absolutely essential in the frequent balls of the aristocracy that took place in the palace. Nowadays, this piece of art is worth 180,000€! In the 16th century, the *Tänukiri* manor house was bought from a Danish king by a German nobleman. In the 18th century, Alexander von Schubert made money from literally everything in the big property. In 1932, his descendants decided to go back to Germany leaving behind all its luxuries. At present, it's owned by three businessmen (two English and one Dane),

who carry out several social events in its premises and beautiful gardens. Near a watermill, there's a small car museum, one of which was owned by the *KGB*, the *Committee for State Security*, in other words, the Soviet secret police. By mini electrical cars, we were also shown a mini golf area, featuring several Estonian regions and its characteristic monuments. Quite interesting! In *Vihula* manor house, we were offered a spa workshop in which we ourselves could make a scrub using, apart from salt, some herbs grown in the property. Then we could bring it home.

In *Toompea*, the historical centre of Tallinn, the capital of the country, we visited the orthodox cathedral *Alexander Nevski Katedral*, built by the Russians, just opposite the Parliament. It was declared World Heritage by the UNESCO in 1997. We also visited the *Tallinna Neitsi Maarja Piskoplik Toomkirik (Dome Church)*, which was originally built by the Danes in the 13th century. It was the only building in *Toompea* that survived a fire in the 17th century and it is the oldest church in Tallinn. It was a Roman Catholic one until 1561, when it became Lutheran. It has its walls covered with uncountable rich landlords' 17th-to 20th-coats of arms. Quite a sight! Near it, there's also the *Toompea* castle.

We pleasantly strolled along many of Tallinn's iconic streets and we appreciated the charming medieval *Raekoja Plats (Town Hall square)*. Then we had dinner at the traditional *Peppersack* restaurant, where we were granted with a roleplaying of *two gentlemen*, in their medieval outfits, *engaged in a sword fighting for the attention of a maiden*. Really funny!

At dusk, we were taken to the *Kadriorgpark* and to the *Palee (Palace)* where the President of Estonia lives. We enjoyed walking along the park at that time of the day because the dusky light enhanced the charming colourful flowerbeds. Apart from the Presidential residence, there are several beautiful buildings scattered all over the park that are nowadays museums.

The aims of this *TPM* were fully achieved: we discussed the activities carried out so far, the LTTAs in Greece (February 2018) and in Latvia (May 2018) and also the upcoming LTTA in Portugal (October 2018). The sightseeing we were granted with and the kind and warm welcome we were given, on many occasions, as well as the moments all of us shared filled our hearts with gratitude and made this *TPM* an unforgettable experience.