

Teacher's feedback after the visit in Bulgaria, June 2013.



*Szkoła Podstawowa nr 44  
ul. Morawa 86  
40-354 Katowice*

Dear Friends,

Our stay in Bulgaria made a huge impression on me. Every day was full of attractions. Bulgarian hosts unveiled many secrets of their beautiful region. They showed us enormous Rhodope Mountains that guard the secret of Orpheus and Eurydice. Apart from that, they treated us with their regional specialties and taught us their national songs and dances.

From the beginning everything was surprising. Our Bulgarian friends took us to the city centre where, among crowds of passer-byes, the students were waiting for us in national costumes. We were welcomed with traditional Bulgarian bread and regional spices. When we were entering the school of our friends we were accompanied by Rhodope Bulgarian Music played on bagpipes.

After the official welcome and a one-minute silence, in honour of our Turkish friends' death, we could get to know the school and its customs. We really liked the exhibition presenting souvenirs from each country that takes part in our project "The Magic Frames". The most unforgettable experience for me was dancing lesson and singing the folk song "Ripni Kalinke" by all of us. During the same day we watched a show in planetarium. We also visited a club called "Pure Hearts" that works with the Cathedral of Saint Vissarion in Smolyan.

I was really looking forward to Tuesday. I knew a great adventure is ahead of us. I wasn't wrong. In the morning we set out on a trip to a famous canyon called Trigard Gorge. The driver of our bus was speeding along the road with numerous hairpin bends while we were admiring scary rocks and precipices. They defy description. You have to see it with your own eyes. When we reached our destination a tour guide was already waiting for us. He led us to the magical Yagodina Cave full of stalactites, stalagmites and stalactones. Allegedly it is one of the longest and deepest caves in Europe. A legend says that whoever gets married in this cave they will be happily married ever after.

Our next stop was Devil's Throat, an enormous cave with underground waterfalls. We could feel as if we were a Thracian musician who went to Hades to rescue his beloved Eurydice. It was scary and beautiful at the same time.

My adventure with wild nature ended up with buying mint honey. It is delicious!

Close to Trigard there is a small town Shiroka Laka. We ate a regional meal there, after which we headed to an enormous music school. The biggest stars of Bulgarian folk music studied there. It was an amazing experience! People were dancing, singing, playing instruments, holding contests and taking pictures. It was a great time!

Our next trip was on Wednesday. We were travelling up and down. We went to Zlatograd which is situated 4 kilometers from Greece. The biggest attraction of the city is ethnographic museum full of workshops where you can spy out craftsmen's work and buy hand-made souvenirs. We especially liked an old school with antique stationery.

After this wonderful day we ordered a Turkish coffee. We all observed how it is made with the use of special dishes placed in hot sand and then poured into cups. The waitress surprised us with this unusual show. The coffees that were placed on a tray were spinning like a merry-go-round and yet not even one drop fell on the ground.

Thursday was a day during which I was surprised again. We were eating dinner on Snezhanka Peak which is 1926 m high. This time of year there is still snow there. When the weather is fine it is possible to see Aegean Sea. At the foot of the mountain there is one of the biggest ski centres in Bulgaria. This year Alpine FIS Europa Cup was held there.

Last day of our stay has come. We chose the best photographs and made a beautiful exhibition which was accompanied by festive celebration summarizing our stay. Mayor of the town and educational authority honored us with their presence. The day ended with a party at the Kiparis hotel.

Our visit in Bulgaria is the kind of adventure that you never forget. Above all, it was due to our hosts who did their best to make our stay great. Delightful company of teachers and students from our partners' schools also made our stay pleasant. In such circumstances a language barrier was very easy to break down.

Thank You my Bulgarian Friends for a great organization of our stay, for kindness and smile, and for an unforgettable experience.

Thank you very much,  
Sylvia Stachoń, POLAND