

**The International Inter-school Strategic Partnership visit to Estonia of the Team from Engineering
Lyceum of Vilnius Gediminas Technical University**

“My World in the Drop of Water” (Erasmus+)



At the moment VGTU Engineering Lyceum is successfully implementing the international interschool strategic partnership Erasmus+ project “My World in the Drop of Water”. There are six European countries participating: Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, the Netherlands, Portugal and Turkey. The project coordinators are: the deputy for education Jovita Ponomarioviene and the deputy for informal education Ernesta Smalinske.

The main goal of the project participants is to stress the importance of both the drinking water and water sources as well as to disclose the ways enabling people to act in a stable and responsible way. The participants of the project are creating an engineering device with the help of which water tests could be taken from a water source and the processes of water research could be done.

On December 11 – 15, 2017 student and teacher teams from all the participating countries went to Estonia, to Koidula gymnasium in Pärnu. The team of VGTU Engineering Lyceum consisted of four students selected by competition: Lukas Barauskas (IIa), Eimantas Radzevičius (IIa), Greta Blochinaitė (Ib), Vincas Žičkus (IIIb) and two teachers: the teacher of biology Edita Lukšaitė and the teacher of English Lina Švilpienė.

All week the students had a possibility to test their abilities in different project activities. The first day started with a meeting at Pärnu Koidula gymnasium. On a short excursion the participants got to know the educational spaces there. Later they took part in the 3D model creating workshop where they not only developed the engineering skills but also had an opportunity to interact with each other. On the second day of the visit the Erasmus+ project members visited MEKTORY – the business and science center of the University of Technologies in Tallinn, where new scientific ideas are introduced and developed into business projects. The university laboratory introduced the students to the methods of water quality investigation and allowed them to try the equipment. After lunch the participants of the project not only looked around the old town of Tallinn filled with the Christmas mood but also made it possible to know it quite well by doing “photo hunting” tasks. They also visited the impressive LENNUSADAM – the Estonian sea vehicle museum. Wednesday was an efficient day at the gymnasium. In the morning the Erasmus+ project participants extended their knowledge of natural sciences in the chemistry and biology workshop

organized by the Estonian students. In the afternoon the representatives of all the countries presented their own prototypes of the water device which they had been creating. They also participated in the project activity during which visual diaries were made. On the fourth day of the visit the project participants went to Haademeeste mineral water factory in which they were introduced to the mineral water pouring equipment. After that they visited Luitemaa natural reservoir which is in Rannamesta Tolkuse swamp formed after the ice-age when the sea retreated. A part of the itinerary was done with the participants wearing snow-boots. These protect the swamp flora and the boots stay dry. That was the most active day. Even though the fifth day was the last one, and therefore a sad one, it was full of activities. During it the participants took part in the activities organized by Koidula gymnasium students and were introduced to the application of medical equipment. They also reviewed the activities and presented the results of the visit in international groups. The students thoroughly worked while creating visual diaries and finishing the projects from the early morning. In the afternoon all the participants were given the participation certificates, were treated to sweets and wrote notes with wishes to each other. Unfortunately, the week passed very quickly.

The project was an excellent possibility to get not only a new experience while taking part in academic activities but also living in Estonian families who really looked forward to the arriving guests. The Lithuanian students have very positive impressions about those families. *'I was surprised by the people's hospitality and friendliness. I was really kindly welcomed by my family,'* Lukas Barauskas, a IIa form student says. *'Despite the fact that my hosting family didn't speak English, I was welcomed in a very hospitable way. The students from the other countries were also very social, so we didn't have to sit and do nothing,'* says Vincas Žičkus (IIIb form). Eimantas Radzevičius (IIb form) says about the visit *'The trip was interesting, it gave a lot of good emotions, raised my interest, motivated me to participate and increased my knowledge. It changed my opinion about living in families. I'm glad that I used this opportunity.'* *'It was the first project for me. I'm glad that I've learned a lot of good things, I got a new experience, I've made new friends, I saw some of Estonia. When the first day finished, I thought that nothing will equal this day, but I was mistaken, because every day was better than the previous one. It was very sad to leave, I'd like to go there back some day. I am happy with my effort to participate in this project and I'm even happier with the results,'* says Greta Blochinaitė (Ib form).

The experiences and impressions, the ideas afterwards indicate that such projects are great and give a lot of valuable knowledge, develop certain skills, competences, let to get to know another country a little bit, its culture, some traditions and people. We, young Europeans, are really glad about the Erasmus+ program and the possibilities it gives to travel, to know different countries and improve.