

Slovak national activity - Excursion to Bratislava

Through the project and its activities, we want to extend the professional, linguistic and social competences of all participants – adults, involved in the project. They are supposed to understand the importance of cultural heritage in everyday life, work, development of tolerance and social liberality. One of the main aims of this project is to make youngsters become more familiar and interested in the national, regional and local history, traditions and customs. It is well known that by understanding their own roots, students are able to accept heritage of other nations. To fulfil this goal we carried out the excursions to the historical places, monuments and significant landmarks of our history.

Through this project activity, carried out at the national level, we will teach them how to know, be proud, present and preserve their cultural heritage in its whole value and demonstrate in a non-violent way.

On November 15, 2019 we set off to Bratislava to visit a magnificent castle located in the capital of Slovakia. Accompanied by professional guide, pedagogues and students got acquainted with the history of the Bratislava castle. Many of them have never heard that the first written reference to the city, appeared in the Annals of Salzburg of 907, in association with a battle between Bavarians and Hungarians. The castle hill was populated as early as the late Stone Age; its first known inhabitants were the Celts, who founded a fortified settlement here, called "Oppidum".



During the lecture young people in particular learnt that even though people have different roots, there are a thousand other things that unify them. This informal way of education engraved unforgettable knowledge about Slovak history. For four centuries, the border of the

Roman Empire, the "Limes Romanus", ran through the area. During the Great Moravian Empire, Slavs built a fortress that became a significant centre of the time. In the 10th century, Bratislava became an integral part of the growing Hungarian state; a stone palace and the church of St Saviour and its chapel were built on the castle hill in the 11th century.

In the 15th century, during the reign of Sigismund of Luxembourg, a castle was built in Gothic style as an anti-Hussite fortress. During this period, a new entrance to the castle was built on the eastern side – Sigismund's Gate – while 7-metre-thick fortifications were constructed on the western side, and a castle well was dug in 1437.

In the 16th century, King Ferdinand ordered the rebuilding of the castle in the Renaissance style, while in the 17th century, when the castle became the seat of hereditary provincial chief, Pálffy, it was rebuilt in baroque style. In the reign of Maria Theresa, the castle was arranged according to the needs of her son-in-law Albert, governor of Saxony and Tessen, who was a fervent art collector and who installed his works in the castle. This collection was later moved to Vienna to become the present-day Albertina Gallery.

Since independence, the castle has served as a representative venue for the Slovak Parliament and houses collections of the Slovak National Museum. Students could see the museum collections proving the development of society in Slovakia from the Middle Ages up to the present. They were really attracted by numismatic collection. The most attractive objects for them were goldsmith and silversmith works. They represent the artistic skills and craftsmanship, taste and feeling of goldsmith and silversmith masters. They document the



variety and ornamental richness of different styles and the labour intensity of various gold and silversmith techniques.

Both students and teachers, who took place in this professional excursion and seminar, obtained information that they can share

not only with project participants, but with people of all nations regardless of skin colour or social and cultural affiliation.

