

First Day - Sunday

We left Romania by plane at about half past six and arrived in Istanbul. From there we had a connection flight that took us to Ankara. After we arrived in Ankara we were taken by bus to Hotel Mola, where our teachers were hosted. We walked around the center of the city for about an hour and after that we met with 2 students from the hosting school. We went by subway to the bus station, and from there it took close to 2 hours to get to Gudul. When we arrived there we met with some other students and we walked to the school's dormitory. Upon entering we had to take off your shoes and wear slippers, mainly to ease up cleaning. We left our luggage in the room we had been assigned and went for a walk through the village. We saw all the schools in town starting with primary, secondary and the two high schools; in the town we saw the traditional houses and we were amazed by the stunningly beautiful landscape.



Second Day – Monday

We were woken up at 7 am by the Turkish National Anthem, and we were surprised to see everybody dressed up in their uniforms ready for a new week of school. We thought that after breakfast everybody would go to their classrooms and wait for the class to start, but here at the beginning of every day of school the principal holds a speech. They also held a moment of silence for the victims of the earthquake that had just struck a region in Turkey. We went to 3 of their classes which I found really interesting, both as subjects and as methods of teaching. We attended 3 of their classes: English class, Religious Education class and Psychology; which were interesting both as subjects and as methods of teaching. In the Psychology class we were asked to think of a hypothetical situation: dealing with a child that cannot hear nor speak; and we had to explain to him, by drawing, how a pen works. Everybody successfully managed to draw a pen and the way it leaves traces on the paper. But afterwards we were asked to explain to him what love is.



Everybody had their own interpretation, but the one I found most interesting was drawing two characters that were apart and then gradually coming together until they held hands and few hearts were drawn over their heads. We were surprised to find out that they had one English



class each day and that most of them only have been studying English for four or five years opposed to what is happening in our educational system where children as young as 1st grade study English. After the class was done the vice-principal took us to a nearby hill from where you could see the whole city, then we went to the local bazaar which was organized only on Mondays. We had lunch with everybody, and once again we were surprised by how warm and welcoming everybody was. After lunch we played volleyball and football in their courtyard.

Third Day – Tuesday



It started just like the first day with the Turkish National Anthem, followed by breakfast. Afterwards we wandered around the town, and found a kid's play space and the kids from within ourselves made a point: we rode a rocking chair. At 11 o'clock all the teachers arrived in Gudul and after all the formal introductions the first presentations were made : the Turkish and Romanian ones. We saw really nice pictures from both countries and learned more about the differences in their educational systems. We went to Beypazari, a city 40km away from Gudul, for lunch, and we also went to see mineral water springs. In the evening we went to the bazaar which was a long street that we kept going on, and at some point we left the city behind us. We kept going up the hill till we reached Hıdırlık. The view was incredible and my colleague managed

to take some astonishing photos. We got back to Gudul and jumped right in our beds.



Fourth Day – Wednesday



This day also started with the regular speech from the principal but there were also displayed traditional dances and a brass band – they were preparing for the National Day which is on October 29th. We organized and glued the pictures we had prepared for this event on our panel, and afterwards there was a real photo-shoot session. The day went on and we watched the remaining presentations of the countries and educational systems. After the presentations were made we went to the





Mayor's office where he held a speech and told us how happy he was to see all of us there. We visited one of the two mosques in the city and a center in which there were produced traditional dolls. We also met the regional education inspector. After this we had free time – and played some games with the Turkish students.



Fifth Day – Thursday



We left early morning to go to Ankara; the road was beautiful until we reached the city border from where we were stuck in traffic jam. During this last project day our teachers presented models of virtual lessons and ICT games from the last project. The strategy for the rest of the project was also discussed and the dates for the future meetings were settled. The official website was launched; afterwards certificates were awarded and group photos were taken. During the afternoon we visited different touristic objectives among which the magnificent Kocatepe mosque – the largest one in Ankara. The tour went on and we visited Atatürk's Mausoleum where the guard was being changed – a real show. The Mausoleum is situated on top of a hill surrounded by trees, and in the middle there is an alley that takes you to the enormous courtyard which is surrounded by huge marble columns. We went inside the museum where we saw all types of objects all used by the great



Atatürk. The next stop was the Anatolian Museum. We could not stay long in the Anatolian Museum because it was closing time, but we went up to the city's old citadel. We were on top right when the sun was setting and my colleague managed to take some really nice photos once again. We recalled our childhood when we saw kids on top of the citadel launching paper airplanes and watch them



being carried away by wind. In the evening we went to Hacı Bayram Veli's tomb which is a mosque in front of which colored water jets were "dancing" to traditional Turkish music. We went back to Gudul and we were really sad because we had to say goodbye to all the students; we took pictures, they played their traditional instruments. Even though it had been a long day we went really late to bed because we were sad it was going to end but happy because we had made new friends.





Sixth Day – Friday



We left really early but that did not stop the Turkish students from waking up to bid us farewell. We walked around the city until about three o'clock when we left for the airport. After that we had a connection flight in Istanbul and then back to Bucharest.



In conclusion I would like to say it is an honor to have been able to take part in this project and this project meeting : to be able to visit Turkey and meet young students, just like me, who had their future already planned; it is a pleasure to be able to work with people from different cultures and learn from them

