



## REPORT AVILA 2nd -7th October 2016.

On Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> October, a group of six people, accompanied by a teacher left for Avila (Spain) for the Erasmus Plus meeting.

We met at Malpensa airport, around 5 a.m. after the check-in and perfectly in time our plane took off, and we left Italy. The flight lasted about two hours, and everything was perfect.

We arrived in Madrid around 9:15, we had breakfast altogether and then we waited for Rosa, the Spanish teacher, and Diego, her husband. We were the first group arriving that day, the other partners, except for the French group, arrived during the afternoon. When they arrived, they guided us out of the airport, where we found a coach, rented only for the Erasmus project students and teachers waiting for us. It carried us to the centre of Madrid.

During the transfer Rosa gave us a bag with the Erasmus + MAP logo, inside we found the programme of the week, the map of Avila, the map of Madrid and other very important information.

On the way to Madrid, we picked our French partner at their hotel and then we reached the city centre altogether.

We were left near a big park in Madrid and from there, Rosa and Diego led us to Puerta del Sol and in the morning they improvised as a guides for us. They showed us Plaza de Espana, Plaza Mayor and they accompanied us into a typical marketplace. There were a lot of colours, different people, sounds and stalls, in the background we saw a deep blue sky, it was a very hot day. At that point Rosa and Diego left us and returned to the airport to wait for the other groups.





We visited the place, and we met again around 13:00 to have lunch together. We ate “*bocadillo con calamares*” (sandwich with squids), that is a typical sandwich in Madrid.

In the afternoon with the French group we went around in the city and we started talking together, at first we were a little bit shy. Everyone in the Italian group was at the first experience.

We arrived in the migrants’ neighbourhood: there were a lot of people, coming from different parts of the world. They sang and danced in the street; in the area Lavapiè there were Indian, Chinese, Thai restaurants, and shops had signs written in many languages and characters. A multitude of colours and smells, it was really suggestive.

From there we split into two groups, and we came back to Puerta del Sol, where we had to meet our teacher again. We had a little bit extra free time then we stopped because we were very tired, we got up around four in the morning.

Around 17:30, we went to a park near Plaza de Espana with our teacher. We waited there for the other students that arrived all along the afternoon. While we were waiting, the other French guys arrived, they sat with us and we started talking quite naturally.

Around 19:30 all the groups were there, we introduced each other and then we left Madrid for Avila by coach. On our way to Avila we “observed” the others.

The trip lasted about two hours, we arrived in Avila about 21:30, from the coach we had the fantastic view of the walls.

We got off from the bus and all the host families were waiting for us. Everyone “took” his student and carried him at home. I went with my family that was very hospitable; I had a shower, then we had a dinner all together, and then I went to bed. The first day was gone, in one of the best way possible I thought.

### **Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> October**

On Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> October, our second day in Spain, all the students and the teachers, met at the school at 9.00 a.m. There, after a brief welcome speech of the principal, Spanish students showed us their school with a little tour.

Afterwards we met all together again and every country presented their works. At first, each country presented articles about migration.

Then there were the presentations of the books some students have read for the project; we presented two book: “Arrival City” by Doug Saunders and “Americanah” by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

At this point we had a “coffee break”, so we could relax for a while and have something to eat or drink.

After that we continued with the presentations and now the groups spoke about the successful

immigrants they interviewed; for example the German students interviewed a singer while the Greek ones a film maker.

At 13.30 p.m. we all took a touristic tram to go sightseeing the most significant places in Avila, as the Cathedral. The tram stopped at the Cuatros Postes, a religious monument: it consists of four Doric columns; in the center of the square formed by the columns, on a pedestal a granite cross stands. From here we could see the whole town, surrounded by the walls: it was an amazing view.

This tour lasted around 45 minutes, then at 14.50 we went home to have lunch with the family.

The afternoon was free and we could do different activities with our hosts.

## **Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> October**

On Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> October, the third day in Spain, we had a one-day excursion, we went to Madrid.

We got on the bus and we start the trip. I really enjoy the travel in the bus, we spent all the time speaking, singing and laughing a lot and so the one-hour-and-a-half in the bus seemed to be like 10 minutes, because time flies when you are having fun.

We arrived in Madrid and we visited the Parliament, we listened to the history of the building and we took photos in the main room.

After that we had free time, so we went to “Plaza del Sol”, one of the most important squares, and there we went around the city with our friends. It was an opportunity to make some new friends, and together we went shopping and we visited the city.

We met again our teachers in the afternoon in front of the Prado museum, ready to enter it. Personally, I heard a lot about this museum and I was looking forward to visiting it. We had no guide, but I still think it was better. We talked to each other, we expressed our feeling about the paintings: art became a way to communicate and I was really struck by the experience. The museum was huge and no one was able to visit it completely.

When we went out it was already evening, and it was time to return to our city, Avila. Despite the tiredness we enjoyed our time in the bus a lot. Then when we arrived in Avila we said goodbye to each other and we went home to have dinner with our host family and to spend some time together.

## **Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> October**

On Wednesday we split into four workshop groups. We had the chance to decide between four different workshop groups: The Drama, The development of the script for the film that we'll be shoot in Lithuania, The beginning of the creation of the book that will “issued” in France, and the last group had to start thinking of the exhibition in Paris, our last Erasmus meeting, in which all the works produced in two years' project will be shown.

My group was the one in which we had to write the script for the film in Lithuania. I worked with a German and a Lithuanian teacher. In our workshop we had to think of a realistic plot based on the Lithuanian landscape. We will go to Lithuania at the and of November, so the weather will be very cold and it will probably snow.

The story we came up with is about a couple from Afghanistan during the voyage through Lithuania. They lost each other and they want to meet again.

In the workshop we split into groups and thought of different, possible stories. At the end we found out that everybody had great ideas, so we wanted to mix everything up, until we created our final story.

In the afternoon we continued with our workshop (we came back to our host houses just for lunch), we improved some parts of the plot which were maybe too difficult to be represented there. The following day we wrote the final script of the movie with a special programme for film script suggested by the German teacher.

I think that our job was very tiring, but most of all very satisfactory. We worked really hard but the final result made all of us very proud.

### **Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> October**

On Thursday, the fifth day, we continued all the different workshops. When finished, all the students with the help of the teachers exposed what they did during the activities. After all the presentations, the drama group staged a play regarding migration, with an entertaining skit that Louis, a French student thought of. After that we headed to the center of Avila to reach the ancient city walls, which we climbed to the very top to have a wonderful view of the entire city. I personally think the whole panorama was majestic, being on top of those walls and looking at the hills that surrounded the city made me feel like if I were on the top of the world. After the wall experience, to finish the day happily, all of us went to the fairs together, it was great fun, there were lots of attractions, accompanied by Spanish music.

### **Friday, 7<sup>th</sup> October**

On Friday morning, we were all finishing our workshops in order to present them in the main class where we usually met every day. The first group was the one lead by Tantely, the French teacher. They explained the instructions to prepare and draw a migration map. The students gave the teachers of each country a list of steps to follow in order to record and make a good presentation. They showed Farah and Dimitria's experience as an example to watch. I had taken part of it and I will always remember Tantely's words "Everyone here is the product of the history". Everyone has a story to tell and we have to listen carefully to it. Stories make people, people don't make stories.

Secondly, the group of the Erasmus Book showed their work. Stefan, the German teacher, was the responsible of it. They had worked at the best quotes of the week. The main purpose was to find a suitable title representing the meaning of the Erasmus Project Plus MAP. "In their shoes" was selected as the best one. It was thought by Pedros, a Greek boy.

The third group was the one lead by our teacher Paola and Rosa, they were involved in writing the script for the drama show. They just read it because it is expected to be performed in Lithuania and the students of the drama show acted really very well, some of them showed great of staging skills. This meeting was very important because it prepared the basis for our planned exhibition catalogue. For example, the migration maps will be showed in Paris.

In the afternoon students went home with their hosts in order to relax and dress up for the night.

Firstly, we all gathered at the school to have a snack to greet each other. Then the group split up in two: students went to the attractions and teachers went to the concert in the main square. In fact there was the Festival of Saint Teresa in Avila, where they could listen to “Tam Tam Go”, a pop music band at “Mercado Chico”.

They had amazing moments spent laughing and talking, with a little bit of melancholy and nostalgia.

We felt as if we had been friends for a very long time. Although it was the last night, it could have been an everlasting one, something to keep close to our heart forever.

### **Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> October**

At 9 o'clock of our last day in Spain we left from Avila. Saying goodbye to our host families was not easy. With them we all had great time, their hospitality was very warm and everybody felt at home.

With a little bus we left for the airport of Madrid. Our flight was at 5 pm so we had some extra time to spend in Madrid. At the airport we said goodbye to the French and to the Greek partners, and then we went to a shopping centre. We went to one of the biggest Shopping centre of Madrid. We were quite sad because the trip was ending. But we all are happy because this was a great experience.

We took the flight at 5 pm ad we arrived at Malpesa at 7.30 pm...