

## *Prize-winners Gathering Strasbourg 2005*

*It fulfilled me with happiness when I heard that I can participate at the gathering in Strasbourg on the invitation of the Council of Europe and the Europe at School Committee, and discuss the topic "Being a young citizen in a changing Europe". I travelled with a lovely girl, with Julia; our destination was Strasbourg - also known as the little casket.*

*When we arrived a nice and witty receptionist greeted us. He told us about the possibilities in the Youth Centre where we lived (pool, sauna, a terrace with a beautiful view on the Parliament etc...) and called those participants, who were already there on the public address system, to meet us at reception. This is when I first met the two Dutch boys Sander and Dunston, and of course the teamers Mateo and Teresa (Italy) Florian (Germany) and Jeppe (Denmark). I first thought that they were participants, because they were just like us: curious, young, funny, and they didn't behave bossy at all. Maybe this is why I liked them very much. They could keep the good work, and the order, without giving orders. It was just that everybody trusted them, respected them, and listened to them.*

*The others arrived a bit later. We were 30 participants, and 4 teamers altogether all out of other countries like Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Malta, The Netherlands, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Turkey, and of course us two from Hungary.*

*The ice breaking activities already started on Saturday evening. A lot of things surprised me. I realised that I already know the Croatian girl from last year, from Slovenia, and one of the Serbian girls could speak Hungarian, being a Hungarian living out of our borders. It was really marvellous when someone spoke to me in my mother tongue. During the evening we not only got to know each other but the whole building too with a game. The teamers divided us into 4 groups, and each group had to find 10 sheets hidden somewhere, and on every sheet there was a riddle which told where the next sheet could be found, this is how we searched every inch of the building,*

*Next day we started the “early morning energizers” that “sweetened” every morning of the week. It helped those who went to bed late in the night, to wake up, and refresh not only our body but our brains. We spent the remaining time of the morning with interviews with other participants.*



*We asked questions from the one sitting next to us about their countries, their family, their hobbies, or whatever we wanted to know about them, and after that we told everybody else in the room. This helped a lot to get to know each other. In the afternoon we went on a boat trip and to see a museum. The trip was fascinating.*



*The prospect of Strasbourg’s little wonderful German town like downtown got a place in our hearts. Although only a few were interested in the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, most of us could broaden the breadth of our views, by observing the masterpieces of contemporary artists. In the evening we went downtown, but this time by foot.*

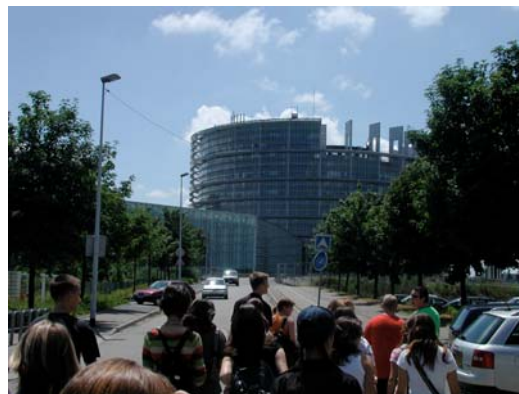


*Monday morning after the common energizer we started a very interesting game. Everybody drew a card, and on one of the cards was written “murderer”. Who got this card was the murderer and his aim was to kill everybody by kissing them, but he could kiss somebody only if the victim was alone or everybody was already dead around him. During the game we went on with our daily activities, but every time the murderer could kill everyone, or two of us could accuse the murderer in the planary room the game was over, and we started a new game. I’ve been murderer once, and I really enjoyed it. It was really interesting every time to see the tactics of the murderer, who he killed, and who he spared.*

*This night we had our first International Evening, where everybody could present the food and drinks of his/her country. The most I liked the Portuguese Portugieser (red wine) and a Cyprian sweet.*

*We spent the following days with interesting things. One of my favourite games was the “EGGsercise”, in which we had to get an egg into a bowl from about 1, 5 meters, only by using paper, glue, and some string. Unfortunately none of the 4 teams could manage this task, but we learned a lot from it. We could see creativity in the eyes of the others, there were persons guiding their teams with their ideas, we saw who could prevail in the groups, and the whole was about strengthening our teamwork too.*

*After getting acquainted with everyone we went to see the institutions of Strasbourg. I really like the Council of Europe, and adored the Court of Human Rights. In the latter we heard a presentation about the cases there, what the conditions are for accepting a case, and about the number of judges present in a trial. Some of us visited the Parliament too.*



*Unfortunately our group visit was cancelled. When we got in, a Hungarian representative was speaking in Hungarian. I was really surprised. But I was sad that only a few (about 6) politicians were present on the meeting,*

*I also really enjoyed the workshops. I joined the one speaking about Eastern and Western Europe. It was interesting to hear the differences between the former communist and the capitalistic countries which some of us talked about. We got to the conclusion that the differences are getting smaller, and that there are bigger differences between the people from the villages, and the people from the cities and capitals.*

*The last day we spent with evaluation, and a big “Farewell Party”. It was a funny coincidence that Mateo had birthday, but we celebrated that too. And in the end we had to say good bye. We became friends already, almost like a big family so it was really hard to say farewell with the feeling that we won’t see most of the other participant again. Most of us said we would participate again, and that we’ll visit each other in our home countries during our holidays. Everybody got a little envelope, in which we got little messages from the participants. In my envelope there were 21 messages, which made me very happy.*

*All in all I want to say that I had a great time in France. I had one of the best weeks in my life in Strasbourg. I hope I can get there sometime again. I want to thank Father Asztrik, the Arch abbot for the interview, and the information he gave to me, my parents for their support and help, who made all this possible for me.*



*Miklós Környei*

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