

Diary: Erasmus - Ankara, Turkey

Travelling has always been one of my biggest passions, so when I found out that I would have the opportunity to participate in an Erasmus+ project in Ankara, Turkey, I was incredibly excited. I had dreamed of visiting Turkey since I was twelve years old, and now I finally had the chance to discover its culture, meet new people, and create memories that I knew I would carry with me for a long time.

Before leaving, I tried not to have too many expectations. Instead, I wanted to enjoy every moment and appreciate the experience for what it was. I knew that I would never again be a teenager travelling to Turkey through an Erasmus+ project, so I wanted to live every moment fully.

During one unforgettable week, I discovered not only a beautiful city, but also wonderful people, meaningful friendships, and valuable lessons about communication, openness, and cultural exchange. Looking back now, I realise that Erasmus+ is much more than travelling or participating in activities. It is about people, connections, and discovering how small the world can feel when you meet people who make you feel at home.

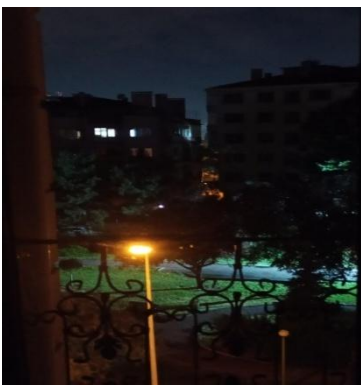
Saturday, 13 June 2026

I woke up early, full of excitement. After adding the last few things to my luggage and checking my bag one final time, I got ready for what would become the beginning of an unforgettable experience.

As someone who loves travelling, the fact that we had to take a plane from Bucharest to Istanbul and then another one to Ankara did not bother me at all. In fact, I was thrilled. I had dreamed of visiting Turkey since I was twelve years old, so finally stepping onto another continent alongside other students and dedicated teachers felt unreal.

The atmosphere on the bus that took us to the hotel was chaotic but fun. Everyone was talking at once, luggage was taking up most of the space, and at one point I even ended up sitting on my friend's lap while we laughed and waited to see what would become our home for the next seven days.

The Grand Hamit Hotel was welcoming and comfortable, making it easy for my roommate and me to settle in. My favourite part was the small balcony overlooking a little park. The view was lovely during the day, but it became truly special at sunset. Standing there and watching the city slowly light up in the evening felt like the perfect beginning to the week.



Sunday, 14 June 2026

I started the day feeling a little sleepy but full of the kind of energy that only holidays can bring. Looking out of the hotel window, I suddenly realised: I was really here. I was actually doing it.

Breakfast offered plenty of choices, and after enjoying it, we left around 11:30 to visit one of the most impressive places I have ever seen: Anıtkabir, the Mausoleum of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

It is difficult to describe the atmosphere and emotions I felt there. Everything seemed almost surreal. Families, graduates, brides, and children of all ages filled the area, creating a unique atmosphere. The place felt alive while still maintaining a deep sense of respect and history.

The architecture immediately caught my attention, but another moment remains especially vivid in my memory: the Changing of the Guard ceremony. People gathered together to watch, completely absorbed by the moment. Compared to other military ceremonies I had seen before, this one somehow felt both impressive and slightly amusing, despite the guards' perfectly serious expressions.

Later that day, we visited a bazaar near our hotel and spent quite a long time exploring. Everyone was curious about different things, and it was interesting to see what caught each person's attention.

However, the highlight of my day was definitely a friendly white cat with two different-coloured eyes that we met along the way. Turkey is famous for its cats, and this one quickly became one of my favourite memories from the day.



Monday, 15 June 2026

I started the morning with a lot of energy, but I have to admit that I was also a little nervous. It was our first day at Ankara Fine Arts High School, where we would meet the students we were going to spend the week with.

The fact that it was an art high school made me even more excited because I have always been attracted to art. On the way there, I tried not to imagine too many scenarios, but I could not stop wondering what the students and teachers would be like.

As soon as we arrived, I was impressed. The school was not only large but also full of life. Beautiful paintings lined the corridors, making the building feel more like an art museum than a school. I could not take my eyes off them.

The teachers welcomed us warmly, and we attended a presentation about the school, its departments, admission exams, and the way education works there. One fact that stayed with me was that there are only three art high schools in Ankara, which is surprising considering how large the city is.

Another thing I still remember is the coffee we were served during the presentation. It was honestly one of the best coffees I have ever tasted.

Later, we participated in an activity designed to help us get to know one another. We had to introduce ourselves and ask as many people as possible about their names, favourite foods, and hobbies.

At first it seemed like a simple activity, but it ended up being one of the most important parts of the day. I realised that I had much more in common with some of the Turkish students than I expected. Learning their names was interesting, although pronouncing some of them correctly was definitely a challenge.

The day became even better when we joined a music class filled with incredibly talented students. Their voices blended together perfectly, and although we did not understand the Turkish lyrics, that hardly mattered. Music has a way of connecting people even when they do not speak the same language.

I cannot choose a favourite song, but if I had to, I would vote for the famous „meow” song. It was funny, catchy, and somehow sounded amazing when performed by them. The audience joined in immediately, proving that even a simple word can become something special when music brings people together.

After the activities at school, I spent some time in a nearby park with two of my friends from my class. We sat together, played cards, laughed, and simply enjoyed being there. It might not sound like anything extraordinary, but it became one of those simple moments that make a trip special.

During the week, I also grew closer to people I had already known before coming to Turkey. Spending so much time together allowed me to see a different side of them. I discovered that they were not only dedicated students but also people who know how to have fun, make others laugh, and make sure everyone around them enjoys the moment. Sharing this experience with them made the trip even more memorable.



Tuesday, 16 June 2026

After the previous day, I felt much more relaxed. My main goal was simple: to socialise as much as possible and get to know the students better.

We arrived just in time for an English lesson with Miss Tuba, one of the most energetic and memorable teachers I have ever met. We played Kahoot quizzes with questions about both Romania and Turkey, and later shared songs that are popular in our countries. Music, dancing, and laughter quickly filled the classroom.

The activities continued outside, where we danced traditional Romanian and Turkish dances together. I have to admit that the Turkish dance was incredibly fun, and I honestly did not want it to end.

One of the funniest activities involved sitting face-to-face with a student from the other country and trying to guess short phrases in Romanian, Turkish, or English. It sounds easy, but it became much harder when dozens of students around us were laughing, shouting, and pretending to be little monsters while running around.

After the activities ended, we finally had time to simply spend time together.

The girls were incredibly kind. They approached me first, complimented me, started conversations, and made me feel welcome from the very beginning. It was through them that I learned I apparently look like Trkan Sray. Before this trip, I had never heard her name, but by the end of the week I must have heard it at least thirteen times.

Since the students had a concert later that day, we stayed at the school for many hours. During our breaks, we bought food, spent time in a nearby park, played games, exchanged fun facts about our countries, and learned more about one another.

One of the highlights was learning a game called Çakmak while drinking Turkish tea. I had never played it before, but it was surprisingly fun, especially in such a large group.

The evening ended with the students' concert. I genuinely cannot describe how good it was. Any tiredness from the busy day disappeared the moment the music started. Some songs were familiar from the previous day, while others were completely new, but every performance was amazing. I went to sleep with the melodies still playing in my head.



Wednesday, 17 June 2026

After the long and eventful day before, Wednesday felt a little more relaxed. We started the morning with a Physics class, where the students presented projects related to houses, electrical energy, and environmental protection.

I never thought I would describe a Physics class as entertaining, but this one truly was. The students shared creative ideas and interesting perspectives, and the discussions that followed made the lesson feel more like a conversation than a class.

To make sure we stayed active, we later participated in a sports activity outside. It was a fun obstacle course where speed was important, but coordination and attention were even more valuable. Everyone encouraged one another, making the activity enjoyable regardless of who finished first.

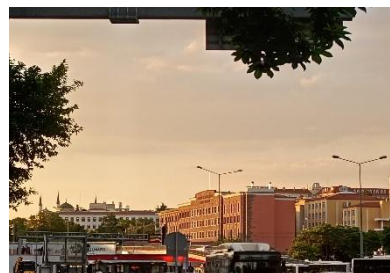
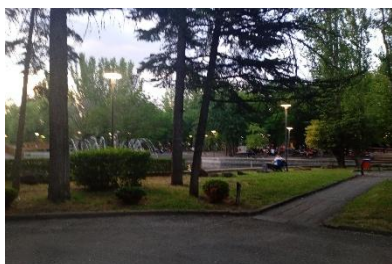
One of my favourite moments of the day came afterwards. Everyone gathered outside and simply spent time together. Some students played volleyball, others organised a football match, while a few of us sat on the stairs and talked.

What impressed me most was seeing how naturally the Turkish students gathered together. There was a large group of them simply enjoying each other's company, laughing and talking. It was a reminder that friendship does not always need activities or plans; sometimes it is enough just to be together.

At one point, I surprised them by knowing how to count in Turkish. Their reactions were priceless. In return, they were excited to learn the numbers in Romanian. We exchanged words, expressions, and little cultural facts, discovering differences and similarities that we would never have learned from a textbook.

After school, some friends and I went out for ice cream and ended up discovering two beautiful parks in Ankara. Walking through them made me appreciate the city even more. Everywhere I looked, there seemed to be a balance between modern life, nature, and impressive

architecture. Combined with the kindness of the people we met, Ankara quickly became a place I felt comfortable in.



Thursday, 18 June 2026

Although the atmosphere was still cheerful, something felt different that morning. We all knew it would be our last day at the school, our final chance to spend time together before saying goodbye.

Wanting to make the most of it, we threw ourselves into the day's creative activities.

We gathered around a large table and worked together on an art project about climate change. Everyone was invited to leave their mark on the paper by drawing or painting whatever came to mind. Looking around at all the ideas and artistic styles, I was amazed by the creativity surrounding me.

Personally, I was quite proud of my little penguin wearing clothes while floating on a piece of ice. It may not have been a masterpiece, but I liked it.

Just when I thought the day could not surprise me any more, we visited the school workshop. There, we met one of the most fascinating people of the entire trip.

A kind and friendly craftsman showed us how he repaired musical instruments and even created new ones from unexpected materials such as animal horns and recyclable objects. One of his most impressive creations was made from a real tree branch with many smaller branches attached to it. Some of them had been transformed into flute-like instruments, allowing him to create music in a way I had never seen before.

The room filled with expressions of surprise and amazement as he demonstrated his creations. Before we left, he even taught us how to make a small flute from a drinking straw. It was one of those unexpected moments that everyone ended up loving.

Later, we attended the closing ceremony and received our Erasmus certificates. It was a proud but emotional moment because it marked the official end of our activities together.

During the ceremony, I heard a quote that stayed with me:

„Every good thing has an end.“

At that moment, I did not want to believe it.

After school, we met up with the Turkish students and went together to Limon Bazaar to spend as much time together as possible before leaving. We talked, shopped for souvenirs, bought gifts for our families, and created memories that I knew would stay with me long after the trip ended.

While some of the others later went to a restaurant, I stayed behind with one of the girls I had become particularly close to during the week.

As we talked, we realised how much we had in common. We both loved cats, astronomy, and learning about new things. Somehow, despite knowing each other for only a short time, our conversations felt effortless.

To remember our friendship, we bought matching star-shaped rings. It was a simple gesture, but it became one of the most meaningful souvenirs I brought home.

I learned a lot from her—not only about Ankara and Turkish culture, but also about kindness, friendship, and the importance of making people feel welcome.

As night slowly settled over the city, we met up with the others and walked back towards the hotel together.

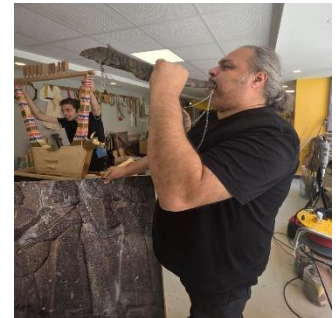
On the way, we stopped to buy Ankara simit. At first glance, it looked like an ordinary pretzel, but appearances can be deceiving. It quickly became one of my favourite Turkish foods, together with baklava and Turkish delight. The fact that many people in Ankara eat it for breakfast made me appreciate it even more.

When we finally arrived at the hotel, nobody seemed eager to leave.

We stood outside for a while, talking, laughing, and postponing the inevitable goodbye.

As we stood there saying goodbye, I realised that this group would never be complete in exactly the same way again. We would never all be together in Ankara, at seventeen years old, sharing the same moment.

I am a very nostalgic person, so that realisation was especially emotional for me.



Friday, 19 June 2026

We woke up early and enjoyed our final breakfast in Ankara before setting off for one last adventure.

Together with our teachers and several teachers from Ankara, we visited Ankara Castle and explored some of the city's most famous historical sites.

One of the highlights of the day was the museum we visited. I found it absolutely fascinating.

Ancient stones covered with inscriptions, centuries-old pottery, historical artefacts, and beautifully crafted jewellery filled the exhibition halls. The jewellery especially caught my attention because of its detail and elegance.

What made the experience even better was our guide, who explained the history behind each object in such an engaging way that it felt like travelling through time.

Later, we had lunch at a local favourite near the castle called Meşhur Dönerci Dursun Usta.

There, we tried one of Turkey's most famous dishes: döner.

Although it sounds simple, it was incredibly delicious. The owner was warm, funny, and welcoming. He reminded me of the kind of grandfather who always has a joke ready and enjoys making people smile.

After lunch, we continued exploring the castle area and wandered through the historic streets surrounding it.

As we walked through the old streets and climbed higher through the castle district, we reached one of the viewpoints overlooking the city. From there, we could admire a beautiful panoramic view of Ankara stretching into the distance.

While enjoying the scenery, we had Turkish coffee and spent our final moments with the teachers who had accompanied us throughout the project. Without their support, guidance, and effort, many of these experiences would not have been possible.

Back at the hotel, everyone spent the afternoon differently. Some returned to the bazaar one last time, others explored nearby streets, and many searched for snacks, souvenirs, baklava, and Turkish delight to bring home to their families.

I found something very sweet about that. Everyone wanted to share a piece of Turkey with the people waiting for them at home.

That evening, I packed my luggage and prepared for the journey ahead.

Before going to sleep, I stepped onto my balcony one last time and looked at Ankara at night.

The city lights, the quiet park below, and the familiar view felt different now. A week earlier, everything had been new and unknown. Now it felt strangely familiar.

I stood there for a few minutes, appreciating the view and silently saying goodbye.



Saturday, 20 June 2026

My final morning in Ankara began in a rush as everyone hurried to finish packing and bring their luggage downstairs before leaving for the airport.

I felt a mixture of emotions.

Part of me was sad to leave behind the city I had grown attached to and the friends I had made. Another part of me was excited to return home and tell everyone about the experiences, stories, and memories I was bringing back with me.

The day felt strangely similar to the first one—but in reverse.

As we travelled back to the airport, I remembered how nervous and excited I had been when the journey began. I remembered hoping that I would make new friends, enjoy the activities, and create good memories.

Looking back, I could not help smiling at those worries.

Everything had turned out better than I could have imagined.

When we landed in Bucharest and started our journey back home, the reality finally settled in: the project was over.

Of course, I felt sad knowing that I would never experience this exact week again.

But more than sadness, I felt gratitude.

I was grateful for every activity, every conversation, every laugh, every new friendship, and every memory we had created together.

Before this project, I thought Erasmus+ meant opportunities to travel, learn, and participate in interesting activities.

Now I understand that it means much more than that.

It means friendship.

It means communication.

It means stepping outside your comfort zone and discovering people who may come from different cultures but share many of the same dreams, interests, and values.

Most importantly, it means discovering how beautiful and welcoming the world can be when you are surrounded by people who make you feel at home.

This project may have lasted only one week, but the memories, lessons, and friendships it gave me will stay with me for much longer.

And for that, I will always be thankful.



Thank you.

Erasmus!

Till the next time, Mara

Erasmus Exchange Journal — Ankara, Turkey

Day 1 — Arrival

The first day set the perfect tone for the week ahead. The flight over was smooth and relaxed, giving us a chance to unwind and build up excitement for everything that was to come. Touching down in Ankara, there was already a sense that this trip was going to be something special.

Day 2 — History & Bonding

Today was packed with culture. We visited the Atatürk Museum, a truly impressive place dedicated to the founder of modern Turkey. One of the highlights was watching the changing of the guard ceremony — a disciplined and moving display that felt very ceremonial and respectful. Back at the hotel in the evening, the group came alive. We laughed, talked, and really started to bond as a team, which made the atmosphere feel warm and comfortable.



Day 3 — Finding My Footing

I'll be honest — today I was a bit quieter than usual. Being surrounded by so many new faces at once was a little overwhelming at first, and I found myself needing some time to ease in. But as the day went on, that initial shyness faded away. By the evening, I felt much more at ease and was genuinely enjoying everyone's company. Sometimes it just takes a little time.

Day 4 — Tuesday: New Friendships & A Beautiful Concert

Tuesday was a turning point. The day was filled with activities, but what made it truly memorable was the time we spent talking with the Turkish students. We clicked with a few of them almost immediately — and those friendships ended up lasting throughout the entire trip. They were kind, welcoming, and incredibly helpful, always making sure we felt included. To top it all off, the evening concert was absolutely beautiful. The music created a wonderful atmosphere and was easily one of the highlights of the trip so far.



Day 5 — Wednesday: School Activities & Anka Mall

Wednesday had a fun, laid-back energy to it. We spent the first part of the day doing activities around the school, which gave us a chance to interact with the Turkish students in a more relaxed setting. Afterwards, we headed out to explore Anka Mall and a nearby park. It was nice to step outside the program for a bit and just wander around like locals — even if only for an afternoon.



Day 6 — Thursday: Coming Together

Thursday felt like the day everything truly clicked. We spent a lot of time together as a group, having long conversations and really getting to know each other on a deeper level. By this point, it no longer felt like a school trip — it felt like a group of genuine friends. That evening, we all headed out together near the hotel, joining up with the Turkish students and exploring the city centre as one big group. We wandered through the streets, talked, laughed, and made the most of every moment.

Day 7 — Friday: Ankara Castle & Last Night Out

Friday was a perfect mix of history and fun. We visited Ankara Castle, which offered breathtaking views over the city, and explored the museum inside, where we learned about the rich history of the Ottoman Empire and the story of Ankara itself. It was genuinely fascinating. That evening, we went out as a group one last time — and knowing it was one of our final nights together made it feel extra special. We stayed up late, not wanting to waste a single moment of what had been an unforgettable week.



Day 8 — Departure

The last day arrived too quickly. We made it to our flights on time and the journey home was calm and pleasant — a gentle ending to an incredible adventure. Sitting on the plane, I found myself already looking back on the week with a big smile.

Final Thoughts

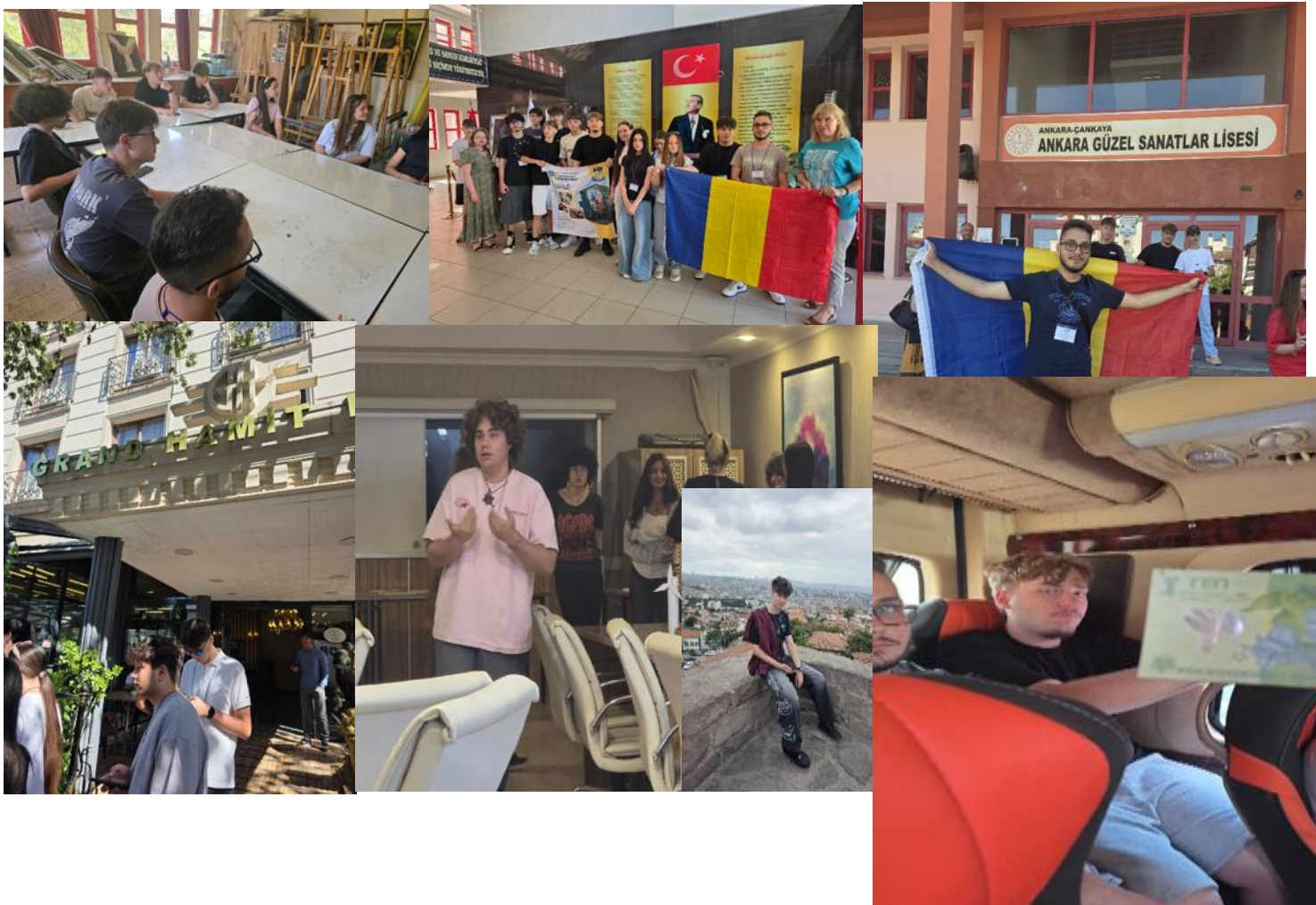
The Erasmus trip to Ankara was truly one of those experiences that stays with you. From the history and culture to the friendships formed along the way, every single day brought something new and meaningful. It pushed me slightly out of my comfort zone, introduced me to incredible people, and reminded me just how much there is to discover beyond your own borders. Something I will never forget.

Erasmus Mobility Diary 13-20th June

This week was one of the most memorable weeks of my life. I got to meet wonderful people, taste amazing food, and see how interesting Turkish culture really is.

At school we were greeted with arms wide open, everyone was extremely friendly and curious about our country as much as we were interested by theirs. The teachers organized interesting games that were made with the intent of breaking the ice between us. They wanted for us to build long lasting friendships and I think that will happen. I still keep in touch with some students from there.

The best thing in my opinion wasn't the school activities, but the city. We got to see how diverse and beautiful Ankara truly is. The random streets where we got lost and had no idea how to get back our route, but the locals helping us, or the delicious local cuisine or when we met up with most of the students from school in a park and talked about our countries and impressions



Erasmus+ Diary

Șerban Rareș-Gabriel

Student at Liceul Teoretic de Informatică „Alexandru Marghiloman”, Buzău, Romania

During the week I spent in Ankara, Turkey, as a Romanian exchange student taking part in the Erasmus+ project, I got to learn new and exciting things alongside classmates who made the whole experience truly unforgettable.

Throughout our stay, we met a lot of Turkish students and teachers from Ankara Güzel Sanatlar Lisesi, all with different backgrounds, who taught us how to see life from a fresh perspective.



Over the course of the week, we took part in a wide range of activities both in and outside of school hours, from playing Kahoot and icebreaker games to wandering around the neighbourhood for coffee and a walk through the park.

We also got to paint alongside the students (fitting, since it is an arts high school after all) and even attended their end-of-year concert in the auditorium.

Outside of school, we went shopping around Ankara with the Turkish students, chatted with them non-stop, and visited some beautiful landmarks with our teachers, including The Anıtkabir, the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, and The Ankara Kalesi, which was absolutely worth seeing.



For me, the Erasmus+ project was an experience I truly needed, one that made me understand the importance of meeting new people, working together, and learning from different cultures. Most of all, it showed me how opening up and communicating across borders can bring people closer than you'd ever expect. I'm really grateful to have shared this journey with my classmates, and I would absolutely encourage any student to apply as it's a wonderful experience you wouldn't want to miss.



of one another. That's what I think Erasmus is all about.

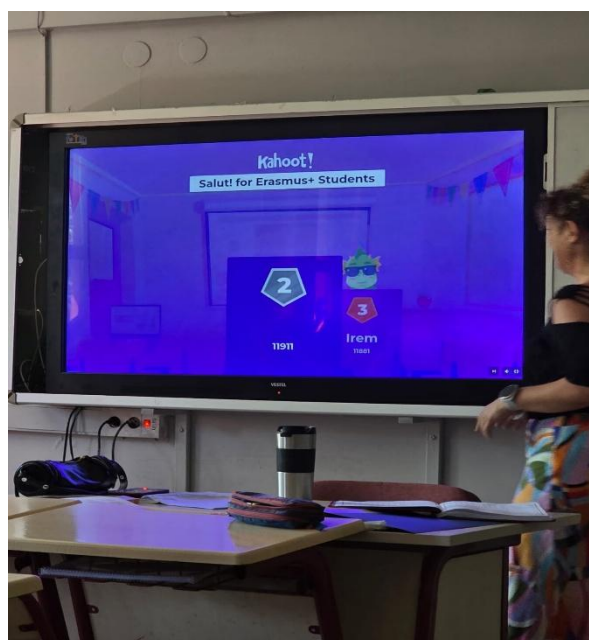
I'm truly glad I was able to partake in this exchange program and look forward to coming back to Ankara

Erasmus+ Project Diary

Taking part in an Erasmus+ exchange in Turkey was an incredible experience. It allowed me to meet new people, explore another culture, and develop important social and communication skills. Throughout the project, I shared Romanian traditions while learning more about Turkish customs and daily life.



Our first days at Ankara Guzel Sanatlar Lisesi were full of activities designed to help us get to know each other. Through games, conversations, and music, we quickly became friends with the Turkish students. We exchanged stories about our countries and discovered many cultural similarities.



As an arts high school, the school offered us a chance to see the students' talents. We visited classrooms, watched artistic presentations, and admired many impressive paintings and drawings. It was inspiring to see how much passion they put into their work.



Music played an important role in our visit. The students performed with instruments such as guitars, violins, drums, and traditional Turkish instruments. Their choir was especially impressive, and listening to them sing was one of my favorite moments.

One evening, we attended a concert prepared by the school. The performances included Turkish songs, orchestral pieces, and music from popular movies. The atmosphere was wonderful, and the musicians showed remarkable talent.



We also learned from each other through fun activities. During language games, we practiced Turkish and taught some Romanian words in return. We spent time together outside school as well, chatting in the park, listening to music, and creating new friendships.





This Erasmus+ project gave me much more than memories. It taught me how valuable cultural exchange can be and helped me become more open-minded and confident. I returned home with new knowledge, new friends, and experiences that I will always remember.



Participating in this Erasmus mobility was an interesting and educational experience. During the 5 days of the project, I had the opportunity to meet new people from an art high school, make international friends, and discover all the beauties art can offer. I also got to explore the capital city of a country I have never visited before, Ankara, and learn about the cultures and traditions here.

The first day there was all about getting to know each other. We were welcomed right at the entrance with open arms and great smiles. My first impression sure was amazing. The first activity we did was listen to a short presentation about the school, which is apparently the oldest art high school in Ankara, and where many current celebrities graduated from. Credit is due to the girl who did the presentation; she was amazing.

The teachers and students then led us to a dance room where we participated in a few ice-breaking activities. We played a bunch of games which “forced” us to socialize with the students there. I’m not really the social type, and I can’t remember that many names in a short amount of time, so it didn’t really help me. What helped me though was the activities from the following day, which I will talk about later.

After we finished, even though the teachers told us to meet with them for sort of a conference, we forgot about that and the students led us to a choir lesson. The choir teacher there was quite surprised to see us there, but after we sat down, the students and teacher quickly mobilized and sang us some traditional Turkish folk songs. I’m not usually interested in folk music, but the way they sang them and harmonized perfectly made me get goosebumps. It felt like someone stole my soul and put it somewhere in heaven. The teachers eventually found us; it was funny to see the look on their faces shift from slight annoyance, to shock, and finally to the same feeling I described earlier.



The second day was way more interesting than the first. We started the day by showing the other country what kind of music people usually listen to. Funnily enough, our music is very similar. After that, we played a fun Kahoot game about Turkey and Romania.

After this, we had a free period of time when we could do whatever we wanted. Some of my Erasmus school mates played ping pong either with each other, Turkish students, or even teachers. Interesting to watch people bonding and having fun with a game that doesn't need any language understanding. We also stopped for a while in the cafeteria to talk. I didn't taste anything from there but from what my friends told me, the food was really good and cheap.

The students had an idea: to take us on a walk in their neighbourhood. First, we went to some kind of restaurant where I had a cookie with seeds and little pieces of chocolate, and some kind of pastry that had spinach in its dough and filled with sweet cheese, I loved it! Unfortunately, I couldn't find the recipe later after I searched for it on the internet... Anyway, we then went to a park close to the high school and we sat on the grass in a circle under a tree. There, we discussed various topics, like our countries' culture, traditional clothes, food, or even the education system, all while eating sunflower seeds. This activity was way better than the games from yesterday.

At 7 pm, the high school organized an end of the year concert. Many people gathered there, including teachers, parents, other students, and us. The amphitheater was huge, the one from our high school means nothing compared to the size of it. All the lights went out, and the concert began with a girl talking to a microphone, probably making an introduction. People started clapping; I had no idea for what, but hey, it was fun. After the Turkish anthem was over, the true concert began with the choir singing the songs we heard yesterday (does it count as a spoiler..?). Once again, it was heavenly, though this time they were quieter because we were sitting far away from them. After that, they performed a few simple instrumental folk songs using traditional instruments like the oud, and the orchestra at the end with some of the most beloved movie soundtracks. They were really good too, but in my opinion the choir was the best.

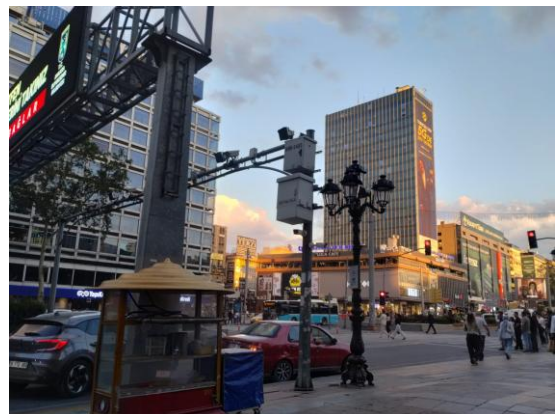


The third day was a very short one, only two hours. In that short amount of time, we hung out outside. The central activity of the day was one organized by the PE teacher. It was a game about speed and accuracy. You had to take some rings one by one to a pole acting as your "home" as fast as possible, all while jumping over obstacles and trying to balance a football on a plastic cone, then at the end of the course you had to take the ball off, put the cone in front of you beside another one, and the first person who hit the cones with the ball and bring them down first got a

point. This game was played between two teams, and the team with the most points won. My favourite team won of course, they were just that good, I never cheered for a “sports” team this hard before.

Some other activities of the day include a presentation about climate change, physics, some miniatures built to better present the subject... I personally love physics, but in my country the school year already ended, and I was tired of everything school related, including my favourite subject and whatever they were talking about there.

After all this I took a short walk in the city together with some friends, it’s not that noteworthy but I took some interesting pictures there.



The fourth and final day of visiting the high school was also a short, but interesting one. The students greeted us with a massive sheet of paper, gave us some pencils and told us to draw whatever we wanted, but to respect the theme of climate change. Of course, what did you expect from a bunch of kids that love computer science and physics? I guess we all shared the same neurons because we started an unspoken theme of penguins with christmas hats on an ice sheet floating on the water. Luckily, the art students helped us be more creative and assigned different tasks to each other, like drawing the clouds, a tree, the sun, etc. Then we started painting, which was a mess. I couldn’t find a paint palette, so I used others’ paint for a while, then a girl gave me one and I was mixing that paint like I was Bob Ross. Eventually I finished painting my penguin in the little corner I picked at the beginning. Meanwhile, the art students were making masterpieces

beside me like it was nothing, while trying to also include us in the art making process. I loved it, I wonder how the whole piece turned out since we left before it was finished for other activities. Unfortunately, I managed to find only one photo of the paints.

For instance, we gathered in another classroom, where every high school department presented themselves and what they do. We also played a few games and drank Turkish tea. In my honest opinion... It's not that good. It was extremely bitter, no matter how much sugar you put in it. I prefer the tea from Romania, it's sweeter and has a better aroma. I heard their tea is usually drank together with baklava, which is extremely sweet, to balance it out.

After this, we entered a workshop inside the campus which belonged to a really great guy. His job was to repair the students' broken instruments. Besides this, he had a great passion for musical instruments. For example, he made interpretations of ancient musical instruments just from the scenes sculpted by the Hittites in the past. He also showed us instruments made from recycled materials, like cans, little plastic barrels, straws, a walking stick, or even a whole branch that had 3 hidden instruments in it. He even taught us how to make a flute from a simple plastic straw. I didn't get one, so I didn't participate in this short activity, but it was interesting to watch others make them.

In the end, we got some certificates that stated our participation in this project. Then our teacher took them all and I never saw mine again. I hope I'll eventually get it back to put it in my college portfolio.



city, with ups, downs, bridges and passages everywhere you look. That day's objective was to visit Ankara Castle and the old town surrounding it, together with the art school's teachers. That area is so hilly that if you pick a spot, anywhere you'd like, and put a ball there, 95% of the time it'll roll down and you'll never see it again. Getting back to the main topic, that area is beautiful, of course, like most old towns. The castle itself was beautiful too, but I wouldn't call it a castle. In Romania, there are fortresses way bigger than this one, and way more beautiful, for example the Râșnov Fortress.

There was also a museum with a lot of things found from the old civilizations that lived here in the past. One of the experts gave us a short presentation about the history of the place, though I didn't really understand anything. He was talking in Turkish, a Turkish teacher was translating to us in English, she spoke too quiet and I sat way in the back. It's alright though, I'm not an archeology nerd, so I'm sure I didn't miss anything important. The museum itself consisted of a big room in

the middle with lots of scenes sculpted in stone, probably from the Hittites, and a hall surrounding it with all the interesting stuff, like jewels, daggers, stamps, and a few funny clay vases and figures. I also saw some clay tablets with ancient writing; I know they're important discoveries and all but I looked past them most of the time.

After this, we went to a little restaurant owned by a guy who didn't really know English, and we communicated with him through hand signs and the few words we knew in Turkish, like the name of the food we wanted to order. The group that stayed and wanted to eat, including me, all ordered döner. From the photos I saw on the internet, it's a roll/sandwich with a mixture of beef and lamb with a few vegetables. Then, the guy started bringing us plates over plates with meat (my Erasmus school mates called it "mystery meat", even though we knew it was just beef and lamb), tomatoes and onion, and some baskets with bread cut in half, but not all the way so it's still in one piece. Apparently, we had to make our own döner with the ingredients and whatever spices were on the table. Even though the food itself was decent, the funny attitude of that guy and the experience of making my own food at a restaurant made it all worth it.



As an ending for this diary, I would like to draw a few conclusions.

This project really meant a lot to me. Besides the obvious excitement of visiting a whole new country and my first time flying by plane, this was a big opportunity to discover a new culture, new food, and meet new people. Ankara is a big place, with a lot more to explore and discover than the few bits and pieces I managed to see in just a few days, and yet those few bits and pieces managed to make my experience memorable enough that I won't forget it for years to come. I especially admired the kindness of the people. Even though our spoken language separated us, body language, friendliness and empathy united us to cooperate.

The art high school we visited gave us an opportunity to see how art can open doors we didn't even know existed in the first place. As students from a high school focused on computer science, physics and math, it was a breath of fresh air to see such a calm environment focused on human

creativity where colors, music notes and acting come together to form a community full of kind and happy people, that have the courage to smile through everything just to continue doing something they love, doing something that allows them to escape reality and let their creativity get wild.

That, in my opinion, is the spirit of Erasmus. Exploring new places and people is just the image, but their essence is what's most important: even though culture, religion, tradition and language separates us in a way, the human soul yearns for connections and friendships, and through them we can see past our differences and create a community in the most beautiful way.



MY ERASMUS JOURNEY IN TURKEY

"We visited one of the most popular tourist attractions in Ankara, Anıtkabir Mausoleum, serving as the of the Turkish Republic."



DAY 1, MAUSOLEUM



DAY 2,

"We met new students and participated in some ice-breaking activities that helped us know each other better."



DAY 3

"On Tuesday we watched a concert which was entirely sustained by the talented turkish students, in their own school teacher hall."



DAY 3,

MY ERASMUS JOURNEY IN TURKEY



"The next day, the PE teacher tested our performances in an obstacle course alongside the turkish students."



DAY 4, PE



DAY 4

"On Thursday we had time to socialize and exchange opinions about the different school systems, our countrys have, with the turkish students."



DAY 5,



DAY 6,

"We spent the last day in Turkey visiting Ankara Castle, a historic fortification in the city of Ankara, constructed in or after the 7th century. We had some nice views on top of the towers."