Erasmus+ Group Mobility for Pupils
Zonguldak (Turkey)
5th-9th May 2025

Host institution: MOLLABEY ORTAOKULU, Zonguldak, Turkey

Sending institution: ȘCOALA GIMNAZIALĂ NR. 11 Botoșani, România

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A new chapter begins

- It all started on May 3rd, 2025 — the kind of day that marks the beginning of a story you know you'll carry with you for life. Along with five schoolmates and two inspiring teachers, Mrs. Cristina Aioniţoaei, our English teacher and Mrs. Eugenia Filip, the school principal, we boarded the road to Türkiye. Our destination: Mollabey School, in the peaceful town of Alaplı, nestled in the Zonguldak region.
- Though small in size, the school had a warm spirit. It welcomed us with smiles and open arms from the principal, Mr. Ömer Yavuz, and the vice principal, Miss Guven Emine. That very day, we stepped into real Turkish classrooms, blending into their ordinary schedule. We developed our English skills through practical conversation, explored electrical conductivity during the Physics class, and painted floating colors using the mesmerizing *Ebru* technique.
- Outside class, we kicked balls, played tennis, and shared stories with Turkish students. In the evening, a boat ride across the Black Sea revealed nature’s quiet majesty and made me realize that it was just the beginningof our Erasmus journey.



Wonders Below and History Alive



- The next day greeted us with adventure.

Deep underground, Gökgöl Cave revealed a magical world of mineral giants- stalactites and stalagmites sculpted by water and time. Along with forty Turkish students, we wandered through caverns and sparkling streams that seemed otherworldly. It was more than a Geography lesson - it was an immersion in the hidden wonders of the Earth.





Later, we traveled back in time at the Zonguldak Mining Museum. Rusty tools, lamps, helmets, and photographs revealed the harsh but dignified lives of the miners.



We reflected on those glimpses of life as we strolled through the bustling city, watching history mingle with modern rhythms.

Traditions Shared, Memories Made

- Our third day unfolded like a

celebration.

After meeting the regional education director, we joined a school-wide festival called *Kermes*. Families brought handmade dishes, from sweet pastries to savory specialties, and we all shared meals like old friends.

- Back in class, we learned about

polygons and even how to build them at Math and found out some interesting facts about Zonguldak city at History.

PE classes were the highlight of the day: we learned how to dance ”Zeybek”, a regional folk dance that blends power and grace.

In return, we taught our hosts how to dance the Romanian ”hora”, step by step and we had a whale of the time.



A Journey Through Time to Safranbolu - ”the saffron town”

- Day four was like stepping into a

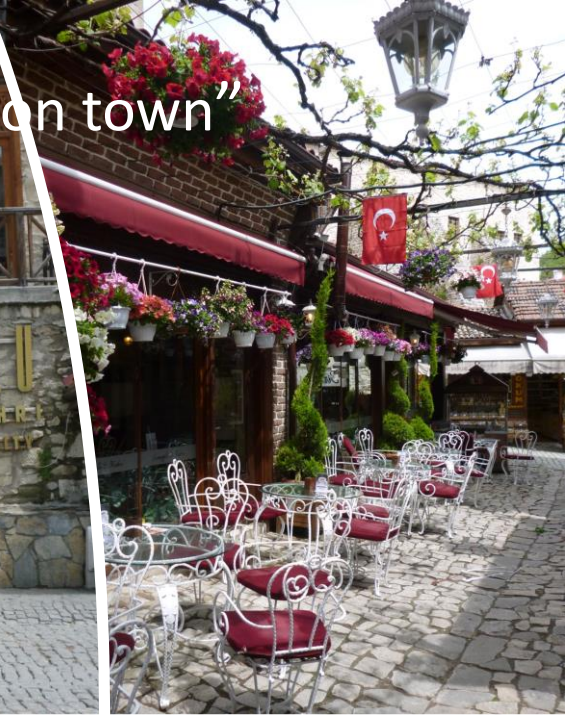
Living museum. We explored Safranbolu, a place known for its saffron trade and remarkable Ottoman heritage. The cobblestone streets led us past shops selling vibrant fabrics, handmade souvenirs, and golden-reddish saffron threads.

- We visited the Mehmed Pasha

Mosque, soaked in the historic atmosphere of the “Cinci Hamami,” and stood under the arches of the “Cinci Han Caravanserai, built in 1640.”

As the sun set, we reached the Crystal Terrace. From up there, the view of the canyon below stretched endlessly. It was the kind of tranquility that made you stop and feel the passage of time.







From Farewell to Discovery

- Leaving Mollabey School was hard. That final morning, we hugged our friends,

we were handed our participation certificates, and promised to stay connected. We shared words of gratitude with our hosts and waved goodbye one last time.

But there was still more to see on our way home. We arrived in Istanbul - an amazing city where every building tells a story from the past.

As we cruised the Bosphorus, historic palaces and majestic mosques lined up the shores. Dolmabahçe, Çırağan, and Yeni Mosque shone under the warm light of the sunset, reminding us that present and past exist side by side.







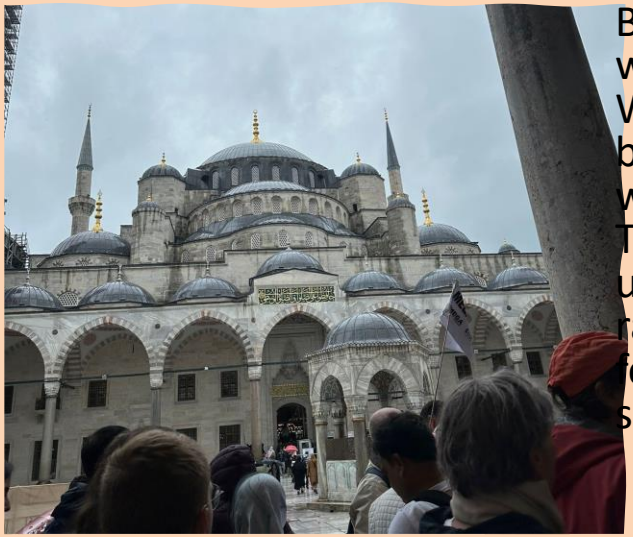
Istanbul’s echoes of the past



- Our last day brought us to the heart of Istanbul.

Our sightseeing tour began with a visit to the magnificent Blue Mosque, an architectural marvel and a place of contemplation, regardless of religious beliefs. Nearby there were the Egyptian Obelisk and the Serpent Column, relics of power, reminders of long-gone empires.





- Later, we descended into the Basilica Cistern, an underground wonder of the Byzantine Empire. Water silently lapped against the bases of stone columns, two of which bore the image of Medusa. The atmosphere was eerie, but unforgettable. Not even the cold rain outside could take away the feeling that we were stepping into something eternal.



Conclusions

- This Erasmus+ experience will remain

in my heart as an opportunity to learn, grow and forge lasting friendships across cultures.

- Thank you to Mollabey School in

Zonguldak and to everyone at School No. 11 Botoșani for making this experience possible.

- May every student experience

such a journey full of knowledge and friendship.



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