

Erasmus-Projekt „Learn From Each Other - Bulgaria 2026“

From February 8th to 13th, 2026, we participated in the Erasmus project “Learn From Each Other” in Bulgaria as part of a student exchange program. At the beginning, we flew by plane to the capital city, Sofia. From there, we took a train to the city of Burgas, where we were warmly welcomed and picked up by our host families.

When we arrived at our host families’ homes, we immediately received a welcome gift. We also gave them the presents we had brought from Germany. Everyone was very happy and felt comfortable. For dinner, we were served a large table full of traditional Bulgarian dishes. Our first impression of Bulgarian cuisine was definitely very delicious. Afterwards, we spent the evening relaxing together, laughing and having conversations.

The families welcomed us so warmly that we felt completely at home.

The next day, we attended an opening ceremony at the English Language School “Geo Milev” in Burgas. Everyone was warmly welcomed and introduced, and we also received a backpack with small gifts inside. The presentation was very interesting, and we got a preview of Bulgarian culture. For example, students performed traditional dances, and others sang. The school even has a band club with guitarists and singers who performed for us.

In addition, we were introduced to a Chinese language course as an interactive activity, where we practiced reading Chinese and learned to write some characters. Afterwards, there were snacks, and we chatted with the Bulgarian students. After the ceremony, our exchange partners showed us around the city and we took photos at various landmarks.

The city is very beautiful and relaxed. There are many cats and dogs walking around the streets, and unlike in Germany, there are not many people with a migration background. Burgas is located on the Black Sea, so we enjoyed a beautiful view of the sea and felt the pleasant, humid air.

The following day, we were given a tour of the school. It is very modern and has a friendly atmosphere. The classrooms look similar to those in Germany, but what surprised us were the cameras in every classroom, which was new and unfamiliar to us. We were also allowed to sit in on lessons. Since it is an English language school, most subjects are taught in English. After that, we participated in a workshop about how students use Minecraft for learning. We were able to try it ourselves, and it was definitely a new way for us to combine learning with

gaming. It was a lot of fun.

After school, our exchange students took us along in their daily lives and showed us more of Bulgarian culture, actively involving us in their activities.

On Wednesday, our journey continued with a trip to the ancient town of Nessebar, a beautiful UNESCO Heritage Site. We visited the Archaeological Museum, which showcased fascinating historical findings from the Greek and Roman eras. Afterward, we had a guided tour through the historic town and visited the incredibly old Saint Stephen Church. Later that day, we traveled to the town of Pomorie to visit the Museum of Salt. We were given a detailed presentation about the history of salt production in the area, learning all about the traditional workers and the tools they used. Because all these tours and explanations were held in English, it became very clear to me how vital a foreign language is: it acts as a bridge that allows us to understand and appreciate the deep history and culture of a place we have never been to before.

Thursday was spent back at the Geo Milev School. We attended a STEM class and noticed that subjects like chemistry are taught bilingually. The teacher and students would seamlessly switch back and forth between Bulgarian and English. Seeing this Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in action showed us that connecting a foreign language directly to practical, everyday subjects naturally builds fluency. It takes the language out of the textbook and brings it to life.

Later that day, we participated in a "Heritage Workshop" centered around an old Bulgarian spring tradition called *Martenitsa*. We even got to make our own traditional red-and-white bracelets! It was a great experience. In the afternoon, the focus shifted back to our main theme: we gave a presentation to the other students about how we learn languages at our school in Germany, and the exchange students from Finland did the same. It was fascinating to compare our different regional trends and teaching methods.

As we attended our final regular lessons on Friday morning before our departure, we had time to reflect on the whole Erasmus experience. The motto of our project was "Learn From Each Other," and we realized that this is entirely impossible without a shared language.

English was the key to communicating with our welcoming host families, navigating museums, following along in chemistry class, and sharing our own culture with both the Bulgarian and Finnish students. We learned that foreign language learning is not just about memorizing

vocabulary or grammar rules; it is the foundation for international friendship, cultural exchange, and global understanding. It breaks down borders and proves that no matter where we come from, a shared language allows us to truly connect.

Hoa Thien and Semi