

Lodz

Tuesday 20th - Friday 23rd September 2011

On Tuesday we (Christoph and me) flew from Cologne/Bonn to Warsaw via Vienna and arrived at the airport in Warsaw in the early afternoon (14:05 local time). We had to wait for a Turkish group so we had time to get to know the other groups.
(here: Christoph and the Italian group)



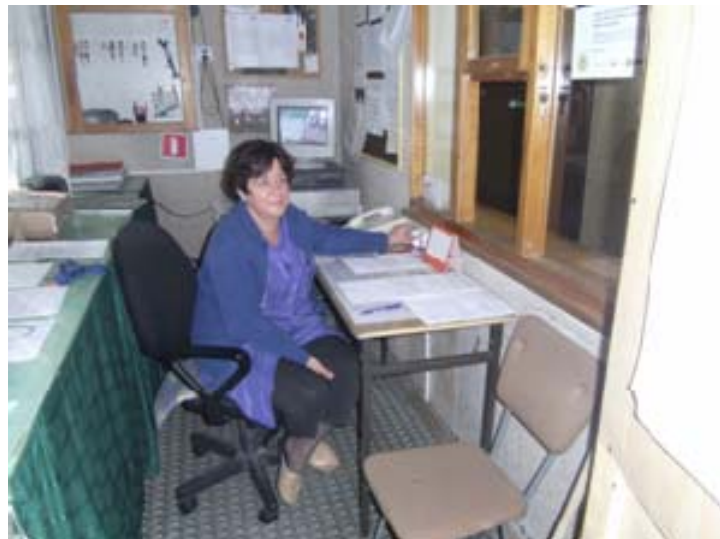
It took about three hours to get Lodz by bus because of roadworks. In a couple of month there will be a modern motorway and you can get to Lodz much quicker. In the school in Lodz (name of the school: Zespól Szkól Ogólnokształcących nr. 7) the students met their guest students and families. The teachers had supper.



After the evening meal we went to the modern shopping centre *Manufaktura*, which was a factory some years ago. After some refreshments in a pub (in Bavarian style) our Polish hosts took us back to the school and hotel. A little hotel was just 100 m away from the school.
On Wednesday we met in school for breakfast.



In the school there is a person near the main entrance who can open door - also at night. She or he can watch who is outside via a camera and a monitor.



But now it's time for breakfast.





Our partner school is involved in a film festival which takes place every two years. The *Opening* began with singing and the headmistress welcomed the guests.



Several headmasters and politicians came to the opening. Some students performed a little play and the school choir sang another song.

After listening to the school choir and the official words it was time for active movement and action.



Students and teachers who wanted to move their bodies had the chance to practise with a gymnastic ball. The participants had to work on their balance and body speed. Stretching and bending over were other aspects of this gymnastic session.



Then it was time for dancing. I think the dance that we practised can be called polonaise. (But I'm not an expert in standard dance and there might be a better word for the dance.) The dance reminded me of dances which took place in Versailles and other palaces at the time of Louis XIV and his successors.



European integration can work with dancing: A French-German partnership (Katja and me) has started.



More and more international partnerships and groups were formed.



After a long training session the dancers headed for perfection.



In a **teachers meeting** the following items were discussed:
Website; project logo: each school will prepare a sketch and in Italy (24th - 28th Oct.) students will discuss and choose a logo; booklet: Democratic institutions ... How does it work in my country? Photo exhibitions: Where do we come from? Migration/tradition/culture

National identity - Do you feel European? What does nationality mean to you? Do you feel the difference when you go to Italy/Spain/Germany/...?

My values - values of Europe: democracy, freedom of speech, Where does tolerance end?

In the afternoon it was time to relax from all the physical exercises and dances. We went to a cinema for the official opening of the film festival. It took 50 minutes to honour the responsible people of this film festival and to listen to their speech of thanks. Important details were translated in English.



Then we watched a film about the forests and the nature in Poland. To intensify the feeling for nature we went to an exhibition two floors above. Christopher is studying the details which are presented to the public.



Later we walked along a shopping street (the longest in Poland or in Europe <?>) and had dinner: Pirogi, a Polish dish. Pirogi (or perogi/pierogy) are boiled (or baked or fried) dumplings stuffed with meat, cheese, potato filling, or fruit.
The school on Thursday



In the morning we went to the cinema again and watched three films:

1. a film about the Alps and the animals in the Berchtesgaden region.
2. a Spanish film which took only 20 minutes.

3. *One degree*: a film about climate change and the consequences: melting of ice which can be seen in Greenland and in glacier regions; population growth and the hunger for energy lead to more and more carbon dioxide emissions with all the negative effect. We need sustainable energy and we have to save energy.

In the afternoon we went on a **sightseeing tour**. The name of the town literally means “boat”, but the river can’t be seen because it is canalised. A number of German immigrants built factories and later on palaces. Lodz became a textile production centre. Three groups dominated the city's: Poles, Germans and Jews. We were also shown the houses of the industrial workers and palaces of the factory owners.



After the decline of the textile industry there is not enough money to renovate and restore the buildings. (40 years or communism also had an impact.) Therefore you can see nice houses and a lot of grey houses which are in a bad state.



During World War II the Nazi authorities set up a ghetto in the city and populated it with more than 200,000 Jews from the area of Lodz. Jews were deported to concentration camps by train. The original station is still there (the train is not original).



A memorial reminds us: Thou shalt not kill (You shouldn't kill!)



The sightseeing tour went on.
We heard that the film industry was important for Lodz; Polanski worked here.
Then we were shown the new shopping centre *Manufaktura*
which was a very big textile factory.



(Picture by Wikipedia)

Our last evening in Lodz.
It was the time to taste the different national beverages. We realised that
we can all enjoy the European drinks and the European way of life.



Can anybody see a difference between Germans, Poles, Italians and French?
Only the languages are different, the rest is more or less the same.



Friday - the day we went home.



A photo exhibition - a good way to get some new impressions.



Before we go - let's take a last picture of our partners.



Dorota, a teacher of the school in Lodz, took us to the station in Lodz and the train took us to Warsaw.



When you leave the station you can see the Palace of Culture and Science, which is the tallest building in Poland. The building was originally known as the Joseph Stalin Palace of Culture and Science.

Everything is international. The Austrian Airline flew us back to Vienna.
(The flight to Germany via Vienna was cheaper than a direct flight.)



Poland from high above

