

**European Food Education Season
Spring School Torun, Poland, 24-28 April 2017**

AHA team:

- 17 students
- 2 lecturers
- 1 chef

The breakdown of the activities for the spring school is as follows:

1. Monday 24th of April

Aha team arrived in Torun around 11 o'clock in the morning and we were accommodated in the MCSM Hostel in a timely manner. The rooms were beautiful, clean and tidy. All students relaxed for 2 hours and then we were invited to go for lunch, hosted by the restaurant located on-premises.

After lunch, we all were taken for a city tour, despite the unfriendly weather and after approximately 2 hours we all attended a seminar that has as main topic the return of sturgeons. The presentation was interesting yet, the information took more time to be delivered because they were speaking in, English and Polish. After the presentation, a tasting session was organized, so all participant could try different types of sturgeon recipes.

At 7 o'clock, we made our way to MCSM Hostel in order to have dinner. After dinner finished we scheduled a meeting with all students in order to review the ppt presentations for the next day. Students were extremely cooperative and we managed to have everything ready by 1 o'clock in the morning, when eventually we went to bed.

2. Tuesday 25th of April

We had breakfast and then all participants were invited to attend the presentations of the most popular fresh water fish recipes of the Romanian group, Polish group and French group.

Lunch was served and after that students attended a seminar and I was invited for a project meeting where the main subject was related to the budgetary consumption. Besides that, Aha team proposed the theme for next year's Spring School which will be organized in Brasov, Romania. Further discussion about the theme Aha suggested, were conducted throughout the spring school with no decision taken on the spot.

After the transnational meeting and after the seminar, all of us were invited to attend another seminar that was held in Collegium Humanisticum (part of the Copernicus University). Like in the first day, the presentation ended with a fish tasting and after that students were allowed to make their own schedule and two of the Lecturers were asked to join the project management team for an exclusive diner in Torun. It was a cozy and nice atmosphere.

Wednesday 26th of April

After breakfast, students went to the Culinary Academy Studio and prepared themselves for cooking sessions. The Romanian students were accompanied by one lecturer and by Chef Horia. While the cooking sessions were in progress, the Coordinating Lecturer was attending a seminar at MCSM related to spirits and wine.

Something to mention about that particular day is that students had too many hours of cooking in a very small kitchen that didn't help much for the overall experience. It was very interesting to understand the culinary traditions of the participant countries yet, there were some difficulties encountered in managing the entire workshop in a professional manner.

Thursday 27th of April

Very early in the morning we needed to take the bus provided by the organizer in order to get to Barbarka Forest where we were introduced to the world of wild plants. We were divided into teams and we were assigned to collect as many wild plants as possible, because in the end that would be our lunch. The seminar itself turned to be very interesting but the weather was very unfriendly so the majority of students were not so involved because of the cold and rain. For lunch a Polish chef was invited and students cooked the traditional Polish dumplings filled with the wild plants collected from the forest. At 3 o'clock we needed to return to MCSM so we can prepare ourselves for the trip organized to the Gingerbread Museum. Once we arrived to the museum we were welcomed by the museum staff and all of us learnt how to prepare gingerbread under the strict supervision of our hosts. Again, lots of information, exciting workshop and happy students. After a tour of the museum, we returned to MCSM for the Gala Dinner where all students and lecturers received presents from the organizers.

Friday 28th of April

After breakfast the bus came to pick us up from the hostel having Grudziadz as destination. Courtesy of the Culinary School from the city, students from Poland, Romania and France were engaged in a gastronomical competition. It was a big opportunity for all students to develop professional relationships because they were divided in 5 teams and each team consisted of students from all countries involved in the project. With the participation of the Polish, French and Romanian chefs, students were able to prepare medieval Polish fish recipes. Everybody worked hard to complete all the task in the frame time imposed by the organizers. The major challenge was the interaction with the French students, due to their lack of English.

A committee evaluated their work and the 1st place was won by a team that succeeded to impress the jury. In exchange they received various presents. From the Culinary School from Grudziadz, the bus took us back to Torun and from there we all left to the airport.

Best practices

- ✓ Accommodation at MCSM was more than perfect even though students were assigned in rooms with multiple beds
- ✓ Rooms were clean and warm all the time
- ✓ All the activities proposed by the organizers were very interesting and useful
- ✓ The transportation to different locations from/to Torun was well managed.
- ✓ The Polish hosts were actively involved in making sure that the entire Spring School is a success.
- ✓ Wi-Fi was a big plus for the Spring School.
- ✓ There were various opportunities to learn about the other cultures and food heritage.
- ✓ The practical activities were very much welcomed by the students
- ✓ Security was provided and was highly appreciated by all partners.

Things to improve

- ✓ There was a lack in a proper formal introduction of all participants so that connections could be established from the beginning.
- ✓ The food provided was not very varied.
- ✓ Students were overwhelmed with the extensive numbers of activities
- ✓ Little or no free time during the Spring School
- ✓ It would have been great to have more opportunities for a better engagement of all teams participating in the project.
- ✓ Some technical issues were experienced during presentation.
- ✓ Communication between partners should have been better facilitated.

Report prepared by Ioana Turcas
Coordinating lecturer of the Romanian team