



Oftentimes we forget that reality is much more than what it meets the eye. Learning through experience requires reflecting; to give a second look thoughtfully and carefully what new has been acquired. We must look beneath the surface of events, understand their meaning and value their importance.

Among many other things, ESC volunteering programs are learning service, and November was centred around this particularity – education and acquiring knowledge.

At the very start of the month, I had the opportunity to visit The University of Tartu Museum as a participant of Estonian Culture Crash course organized by International House Tartu. We had a fascinating tour with the guide on Toome Hill about the old Cathedral and we looked into the history of science and education of the Tartu University. The whole experience was enriched by short discussion with the international members of the course regarding the similarities and differences in Estonian educational institutions and our natives ones. Everyone was amazed with the quality of Estonian education and how much Estonians value and cherish it.

Worth mentioning is also a visit to the Tartmus, Tartu art museum. Eccentric, but very charming guide spoke about turbulent history of Estonian art, and led us through contemporary art exhibitions. It was very interesting for me to draw parallels between art and science chronicles, and see how different political regimes impacted and shaped them.





As an important and mandatory part of every ESC project, my On Arrival training was held this month in Viimsi. I have met other volunteers working here in Estonia, learned more about principals and main purpose of every ESC program, had first insights on Eesti keel and danced! The glorious moment for me was when we were all sitting at the table, I was hearing spanish language in the background, I was speaking on french with one Italian and French volunteer about our native cultures, and suddenly, French guy started to sing, in my native serbian language, Tamo daleko, famous serbian folk song which I personally really like! I was touched and I was tearing up. Yes, I am very emotional even now just by going through memory.

Working days in Loodusmaja were mostly filled with preparations for the Christmas charity fair. Motto for this year was “A gift from the heart, no plastic wrapping needed”. I have created my first crafting workshop with Aili’s great help. **Aili Elts** is a Hobby School Teacher, and one of my supervisors on the project. Main goal was to show and instruct people how to reuse scrap paper material such as old posters, newspapers and calendars to create something new - useful bags and boxes. I love “hands on work” experience and making paper crafts, also it was very enjoyable to meet other co-workers. Loodusmaja is a complex center, with such a variety of people and activities, and I am still learning how this house “breathes”.





Additionally, I was helping Gedy with her international networks. **Gedy Matisen** is an Estonian National Coordinator of UNESCO's Baltic Sea Project, and an ASPnet Schooling Coordinator. On November 29, 2019 Lyceum 179 from Saint Petersburg held a regional conference with international participation "Projects and studies – implementation of the environmental component of education for sustainable development." The main aim of the conference was to promote schools who are actively working on popularization of environmental education and teaching about sustainable development. Students had the opportunity to present their experience of instrumental environmental research to the various experts and scientists and my task was to do the media journalism coverage of the event. **Mana Kaasik**, Freelance Photographer and Graphic Designer from TYPA Museum, instructed me how to do this work at a more professional level. Everything I do, I want to do with well thought and as best as I can.

On this brief, but full of wonder journey I had a chance to meet **Viktorija Rudenko**, Global Education Project Coordinator and UNESCO ASPnet National Coordinator from Estonia and **Aira Uuden-Selander**, General Coordinator of UNESCO Baltic Sea Project from Finland, both inspiring and pleasant women who I will work with in the future. Furthermore, whole Saint Petersburg experience for the Estonian team was enriched with guided visit of the State Russian Museum and guided city sightseeing tour. I am still processing memories of this unique in architecture and massively built city.





Finally, I cannot emphasize enough how much I am continuously thrilled by the people I keep meeting. In the International House Culture course, on my On Arrival training, in Loodusmaja, in TYPA, in Art school I am surrounded by such a variety of good people. Everyone is very caring, polite, pure hearted, open minded and passionate about their work. Listening to people's stories, their thoughts, opinions and interests I get to learn new stuff about any random thing, as well to reflect on myself and see how I can grow as an individual.

We are all mirrors of each other's in this world, and I am learning how to be good in every sense, so I can be a good example later on and share knowledge with others.

