

My personal experience of a Liberty Camp

I will be retelling this story that opened up my mind to new opportunities and myself to new experiences as a result of a conversation that I had during the trip from Slovenia to Austria with one of the persons due to whom the Liberty Camps were organized and I was privileged to attend two of them in one month.

Everything started with a forwarded message that I received on my e-mail box regarding the possibility to practice English language and discuss liberal ideas in an international environment. It sounded great for me, so I applied for both the English Liberty Camp from Poland as well as for the Slovenian Liberty Camp, hoping to be accepted at least to one of them. In several days I had the biggest surprise to find out that I have the chance to go to both countries!

I was totally overwhelmed because I was thinking that it is not possible to go both to Poland and Slovenia - I needed time, I needed money, I had to open 2 visas; it seemed practically impossible at that time. So, during several nights instead of enjoying the several hours which are meant for sleeping, I was brainstorming and thinking which camp to choose or even how to manage so as to attend both of them? Till one morning, when I woke up very determined and I said to myself that I will do it! I don't know how yet, but I will go not only to Poland and Slovenia, but I will visit Austria also! And believe me or not, but I really did it!

It took me 1 month to gather the puzzle that I had in my mind – a week to collect all the papers that I needed in order to apply for a visa; 3 days that I spent at the Polish Consulate from the Republic of Moldova to explain the situation with the visas; 2 nights that I spent at the Common Application Center standing in a queue and trying to apply for a Schengen Visa and another 10 working days filled with uncertainty whether I will be offered a visa or not.

During all this period of time when I was too discouraged to believe that there will really be a happy ending, I had an enormous technical and moral support coming from the part of two amazing persons – Jacek Spindel the organizer from Poland and Primož Kocuvan from Slovenia. Guys, if there wouldn't be you, I wouldn't have made it; thank you a lot!

So, after two weeks of waiting, when I finally took my passport and I saw that there really is a visa, I was extremely excited and happy, I couldn't believe it, but it was really true! And imagine, that at that time, I practically didn't know about the whole essence of the camps, all I knew that I had a passport with a visa in it and that I'm leaving to practice English together with other young people like me. But, this was only a general idea, because a camp isn't composed only from English classes, it is something similar to a book made up from a whole set of pages each of which is telling a different story, its own ...

So, this book placed on the front pages the teachers, the organizers and the special guests that we had, whom we enjoyed listening and from whom we learned a lot of new and interesting things.

Then there were placed the immediate participants. Because being in the middle of another 20-30 students from totally different countries that share a different cultural background but who are sharing the same ideas like you, makes you feel as a part of a big international family, especially at the evening parties

During the classes and discussions that we had, I gained so much knowledge, I found out so much new information, I met a lot of people, I had so much fun, I discovered the others, but in the same time I discovered myself from a totally new perspective, I became more open and more interested in something new, I gain a lot of experience and I even opened up to more ... that is why, I'm already having the idea that in several years maybe I will have the possibility to bring a Liberty Camp in Moldova also.



So, as a result now, after one month since the ending of the Liberty Camps, I made one more step towards knowledge and I became involved in a new project that is ironically called the "Next Step" ☺

And at the end, I can only add that those 2 weeks spent with all those great persons just convinced me once more how beautiful life can be, especially when you are open to new visions, new experiences, new people and new ideas ... So, thank you, Glenn, for being a great companion during the trip and for the conversation that we had in the train and that inspired me to lay down on the paper my personal experience of a Liberty Camp. Thanks everyone – Mary Lou, Kenli, Erin, Tanja, Tomaž and all the others! I really miss the beautiful time spent during the Camps! I enjoyed it a lot and I really hope to have the opportunity to be a participant at one of your next camps.

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