Participant: Dr. Guntis Kalme

Sending Institution: Luther Academy

Host Country: Estonia

Host Institution: Estonian Free Church Theological Seminary

Mobility Duration: January 7 to January 11, 2026.

Motivation to Participate in Erasmus Study Mobility

My motivation to participate in the Erasmus+ Staff Training Mobility – BIP on *Mental Health and Caring Communities* AD 2026 was based on the increasing importance of mental health issues in contemporary society, Christian ministry, and my own professional work as a chaplain of the National Guard.

This mobility offered a valuable opportunity to deepen my understanding of mental health from theological and pastoral perspectives, as well as to develop practical skills relevant for supporting individuals and communities. Participation in this programme was closely aligned with my professional responsibilities and contributed directly to my academic development and pastoral competence.

Cooperation with the Sending and Receiving Institutions

The mobility was implemented in cooperation between the sending institution, Luther Academy, and the receiving institution, Estonian Free Church Theological Seminary.

Cooperation between the institutions was efficient and well organized. Communication, academic coordination, and logistical arrangements were clear and timely throughout the mobility period. The receiving institution provided appropriate academic facilities and a supportive learning environment, ensuring the smooth and effective implementation of the programme.

Academic and Personal Achievements

During the mobility, I expanded my knowledge of key mental health challenges and their relevance to Christian faith, pastoral care, and community support. The programme contributed to a clearer understanding of issues such as anxiety, depression, suicide prevention, and basic crisis intervention.

In addition, I strengthened practical skills in active listening, empathetic communication, and awareness of crisis situations. These competencies are directly applicable to my professional duties in teaching, pastoral work, chaplaincy within the National Guard, and broader community engagement.

Most Memorable Impressions

The most significant impression of the mobility was not a single particular event, but rather the overall integration of academic learning with practical application and reflective discussion. The international learning environment and the exchange of experiences among participants from different countries enriched the programme and provided broader perspectives on mental health challenges across Europe.

Practical Advice for Future Erasmus+ Participants

Future participants are encouraged to engage actively in all academic and practical activities and to approach the mobility with openness to interdisciplinary learning. From my perspective, it would be particularly beneficial to include a clearer conceptual framework on mental health at the beginning of the programme in order to support later practical sessions more effectively.

Advance preparation and post-mobility reflection are strongly recommended to ensure the effective transfer of acquired knowledge and skills to the home institution.

Additional Reflections

The Erasmus+ Staff Training Mobility confirmed the relevance of mental health as an essential aspect of professional responsibility and community life. The mobility contributed positively to my academic profile and professional competence and will have a lasting impact on my future teaching, pastoral ministry, and chaplaincy work.

Dr. Guntis Kalme

15.01.2026. A.D.