



Participant: **Ineta Kristovska**

Sending Institution: Luther Academy

Host Country: Slovakia

Host Institution: Catholic University in Ružomberok (Slovakia) and the Faculty of Education, Matej Bel University, Banská Bystrica (Slovakia)

Mobility Duration: 08/06/2026- 12/06/2026

1. Motivation to Participate in Erasmus+ Study Mobility

The main motivation for participating in the Erasmus+ staff mobility programme was to strengthen international academic cooperation between Luther Academy and partner higher education institutions in Slovakia. The mobility provided an opportunity to exchange knowledge and experience in the fields of higher education management, quality assurance, research development, internationalization, and theological education.

A specific objective of the visit was to further develop cooperation with the Faculty of Education of Matej Bel University in preparation for the Blended Intensive Programme (BIP) planned for October 2026. Ten students and staff members from Luther Academy are expected to participate in this international programme. Therefore, the mobility served as an important opportunity to discuss organizational arrangements, academic content, learning outcomes, and future opportunities for student and staff engagement within Erasmus+ activities.

The mobility also aimed to explore possibilities for future collaboration in research, staff and student mobility, joint academic initiatives, and international project development. In addition, it supported professional growth through engagement with colleagues from different academic and cultural environments, contributing to the continuous improvement of teaching, research, and internationalization at Luther Academy.

2. Cooperation with the Sending and Receiving Institutions

The mobility was made possible through excellent cooperation between Luther Academy and the host institutions. The sending institution provided full administrative and academic support during the planning and implementation of the visit. Both the Catholic University in Ružomberok and the Faculty of Education of Matej Bel University demonstrated outstanding hospitality and professionalism. Meetings with university leadership, faculty members, researchers, and international office

representatives created a productive environment for discussing institutional priorities, research activities, internationalization strategies, and future cooperation opportunities.

The open and constructive dialogue established during the visit strengthened existing partnerships and created a solid foundation for future academic collaboration

3. Academic and Personal Achievements

The mobility resulted in several significant academic and professional outcomes. Discussions focused on potential joint research initiatives, academic publications, staff and student exchanges, participation in Erasmus+ projects, and opportunities for organizing guest lectures and conferences.

The visit provided valuable insights into the management of higher education institutions, teacher education programmes, quality assurance systems, and approaches to research development within the Slovak higher education sector. These experiences will contribute to the ongoing development of internationalization and research activities at Luther Academy.

On a personal level, the mobility enhanced intercultural communication skills, broadened professional networks, and provided a deeper understanding of contemporary challenges and opportunities in European higher education.

4. Most Memorable Impressions

One of the most memorable aspects of the mobility was the warm hospitality and collegial atmosphere at both host institutions. The openness of academic staff and university leadership encouraged meaningful discussions and the exchange of best practices. Particularly impressive was the commitment of both universities to academic excellence, international cooperation, and student-centred education. The opportunity to visit university facilities, libraries, and research environments provided valuable insight into their academic culture and institutional development.

Equally memorable was the opportunity to experience the cultural and historical heritage of central Slovakia. The visits to Ružomberok and Banská Bystrica highlighted the rich spiritual, educational, and cultural traditions of the region, demonstrating the close relationship between higher education, community engagement, and cultural identity.

5. Practical Advice for Future Erasmus+ Participants

Future Erasmus+ participants are encouraged to prepare their mobility activities carefully and establish clear objectives before departure. Early communication with colleagues at the host institution helps maximize the academic and professional benefits of the visit. Participants should actively engage in both formal and informal discussions, as networking opportunities often lead to valuable long-term collaborations. It is also beneficial to learn about the host institution's strategic priorities and research interests in advance to identify common areas for cooperation. Flexibility, openness to new perspectives, and willingness to engage with different academic cultures significantly enhance the

Erasmus+ experience. Practical preparation regarding travel arrangements, accommodation, and local customs also contributes to successful mobility.

6. Additional Reflections

The Erasmus+ staff mobility reaffirmed the importance of international cooperation in strengthening the quality and relevance of higher education. Exchanges between institutions contribute to the sharing of knowledge, innovation, and good practices while fostering mutual understanding among European academic communities. The cooperation established with the Catholic University in Ružomberok and the Faculty of Education of Matej Bel University offers promising opportunities for future collaboration in research, academic exchange, and international projects. Such partnerships support the strategic goals of Luther Academy and contribute to the broader objectives of the European Higher Education Area.

Overall, the mobility was professionally rewarding, academically enriching, and personally inspiring. It strengthened institutional relationships, expanded professional networks, and reinforced the value of Erasmus+ as a catalyst for international cooperation and academic development.



