

LATVIA

MARCH 2026

2026 Euro section trip!



SECTION SVT

&

SECTION HISTOIRE-GÉO

Table of Contents

03 MONDAY
Inclusion, diversity and democracy

04 TUESDAY
Workshops

05 WEDNESDAY
Hiking in forest, hemp farm and ice cream factory.

06 THURSDAY
Landfill, castle and party

07 FRIDAY
Trip to Riga (capital city)

08 SATURDAY
Travel back to France

Acknowledgements

Teachers and students would like to thank the **European Union** and the **Erasmus+** programme. The Erasmus+ grant made this school exchange in Latvia possible. It was a great opportunity for students from different backgrounds to travel and meet other Europeans. We hope that the friendships and connections made during this trip will last for many years to come!





During our first day in Latvia we went to visit the school in Smiltene, our day at the school started with an introductory speech by one of the teachers. After the speech we went on a guided tour of their school, which much to our surprise seemed to actually receive funding and so, despite what our Latvian friends insisted, the school was absolutely amazing. Following this tour, we discussed inclusion and diversity and how it is seen inside our schools. We also did some ice breakers to better get to know each other before going to lunch.



We had lunch at their school's cafeteria, which, once again, seemed to receive actual funding. The lunch was absolutely delicious although its exact composition does escape me.

After lunch we engaged in some energizing activities before playing a democracy simulator where we organized ourselves into villages and had to make "strategic" decisions that would benefit us the most to conserve our populations during a drought. The game was very fun and allowed us to properly understand some political decisions. All in all it was a very enjoyable day.



Tuesday 24 March 2026

We arrived at school at 8. We went to physics classes with our exchange partners. It was kind of interesting even if we didn't understand much. Their classes last 40 minutes and they have 10 minutes breaks between each class. Then, we waited in the hall for the activities to start. We were lucky to attend six performances such as traditional dances, a choir, hip-hop dance, a band concert and a saxophonist, trumpapist and a flute player concert.

After all that, we took a turn on 3 different activities. One group went to make friendships bracelets, another to make personalized tote-bags and the last one went to dye some eggs with natural materials. The eggs dying is an ancient tradition in Latvia for Easter. One of the group even had the chance to participate in the construction of a friendship bench.

We then went for lunch and were kind of impressed by the many choices they had in terms of food. It was good but simple. After lunch, We finished some of the activities. And later we had some free time. Maëlle went for a walk with her host family in the nature. Nokomis also went for a walk with her own host family in a forest. This day was full of discoveries about latvian culture and environment.

Nokomis & Maëlle



WEDNESDAY 25 OF MARCH, VALMIERA



We left the Valmiera's highschool at 9am to visit a forest near to the city. In there we made pairs of Latvian and French students with whom we went for a walk and learned some Latvian expressions :

- labrit = hello
- paldies = thank you
- sveiki = hi ...

The forest seemed very weird and new to us because the trees were so high and they had some red colour which made us think of a sunset setting on them.

Afterwards, we went back to the bus and left the forest for an family-run farm. There, an old Latvian man welcomed us and explained different aspects of his work : like how to make a rope with hemp fiber or how to grind the hemp leaves to make it something edible.

And that's exactly this edible thing that we ate for lunch with tea , we put that black kind of powder that looks like earth on butter toast and weirdly it wasn't tasting that bad ! that's why most of us and I bought jars of it and cannabis candies.

To end the day, we visited an ice cream factory in Rujiena where we learned about their story before tasting some of their products like ice cream balls, ice cream and also some kind of sparkles ice cream. It was delicious!

THURSDAY THE 26TH OF APRIL 2026:



In the afternoon, we visited, Cēsis Castle, the oldest castle in Latvia dating back 800 years to 1206. We went on a guided tour accompanied by a man dressed as a member of the knightly order who used to inhabit the castle. The tour consisted of a lot of history lessons about the castle. We learnt about its construction, the knights who inhabited it, the multiple battles that occurred around it as well as some of the more modern history, notably how it survived world wars I and II. This experience allowed us to better understand some of Latvia's history.

In the evening, we went to a party held by the host school. It consisted of several hours of music and dance which, accompanied by the veritable cornucopia of food & snacks, created a beautiful scene. I would say that everyone enjoyed themselves and had a very very good time. The music was picked by the students and so we heard a lot of Latvian music and towards the end of the night it tended to be more French music. In any case the evening was immensely enjoyable and allowed all of the students from both countries to be more at ease with each other and I hope that everyone was able to make some great memories and friends.

We left Smiltene and Valmiera in the morning to go to a landfill and recycling centre. At this centre we engaged in three activities. The first of these activities was a tour of the landfill. The tour was a greatly enlightening experience. It allowed us to better understand the scale of waste created by humans. The next activity was a VR experience where we were able to observe different scenes in a first person point of view. We saw some scenes of human-created waste, and to conclude we were shown an immersive film featuring different animals and ecosystems across the world. The final activity we did at the centre was an experiment where we sorted bits of micro-plastic and were shown how to identify if an unidentified object was, in fact, plastic or not. This experience allowed us to better understand the effects of human activity on our planet and environment. It equally showed us some ways to correct the course we have been walking on since the industrial revolution.

Then we went to lunch at a wonderful restaurant in an old sanatorium dating back to the XIIIth century. The setting created an atmosphere that is unmatched by any culinary experience that I have had the grace and luck to experience. The lunch in itself was delicious. It consisted of some scrumptious pizzas we had ordered several weeks beforehand as well as some side dishes and deserts. The event was brilliant and something to remember.





Friday the 27th of march

In the morning, we took the bus with our luggage. Half of the French had to say goodbye to their host. The other half came with us to Riga.

When we arrived in Riga, we formed mixed groups with Latvian and French students to visit the city. We had a mission: to complete a bingo, during which we had to take specific pictures.

For example, we had to take pictures that represent France, Latvia, or pictures in a special posture like a ballerina. We visited the oldest house in Riga which was built in 1700, the opera house and many other monuments.

Then, the other half had to say goodbye to their exchange students. It was a sad moment because many French students became friends with their host. Then, we went to the hotel. We had some free time to visit and buy souvenirs of Riga like magnets, cards, mug and soft toys.

After our free time we got together to go eat. We went to a restaurant which was a sort of canteen. It was really good and we had many options.





SATURDAY

Back to France !

WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOME OUR
LATVIAN HOSTS IN NEXT AUTUMN