THE 23rd CENTRAL EUROPEAN OLIMPIAD IN INFORMATICS
PIATRA NEAMŢ, ROMÂNIA, JULY 18 – 23, 2016

The Trip to Iași

The third day of the CEOI was a break for the contestants. Some of them preferred to remain in the hotel to relax for the second session of the Olympiad, but most of them came on a city break in Iași.

Probably you will wonder: "Why Iași?" Well, that's a very good question. Because we don't want to bore you with a big pile of words taken from Wikipedia, we will just tell you general information about the other city placed on seven hills, besides Rome.

Earlier in history, before the union which resulted in today's Romania, there were three little lands: Transilvania, Moldavia and Tara Românească (in English – the Romanian Country). Iași was the capital city of Moldavia. As a capital city, it had a palace for the king, a metropolitan cathedral, a university and other imposing buildings. Today, Iași is the cultural capital of Moldavia. Some important monuments and buildings are conserved and presented as touristic attractions.
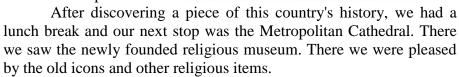
So, that being said, we went to Iași to discover a little bit of Romanian history, art and culture. At 8:30, we fired up the coaches and started the trip. The two-hour journey to Iasi was a very good occasion for a nap before facing the Romanian art and culture.

Once arrived at Iași, we started our city tour with the Palace of Culture (in Romanian – Palatul Culturii). There, we saw four museums: the Ethnographic Museum of Moldavia, the History Museum, Stefan Procopiu Science and Technique Museum, the Arts Museum and the Moldavian National Museum Complex.

After discovering a piece of this country's history, we had a lunch break and our next stop was the Metropolitan Cathedral. There we saw the newly founded religious museum. There we were pleased by the old icons and other religious items.

The city tour ended with a shopping session at the largest mall in Iași. There, everybody spent an hour shopping or just walking around.

And that ends our trip to Iași, city that, most of us have probably seen for the first time. We hope the contestants enjoyed the trip to the fullest and we wish them the best results on Friday!

And now some of the impressions of the contestants about the trip to Iași ☺

"The Romanian folk costumes that we saw at the Palace of Culture and the machines for wine look a lot like the Slovakian ones, so we felt a little bit like home. The Arts Musem impressed us with that musical instrument that played itself. Also, those paintings were something that we had never seen before."
(the Slovakian team).

"From the outside the Palace of Culture looks quite nice, quite impressive. What we liked the most was the last part where we saw interesting technical exhibitions with some music stuff. We were also quite impressed by the mall which is really big and looks very cool next to the Palace of Culture"
(the Polish team)

Interview

Josip Kelava – contestant from Croatia

Q: How did you find the subjects? Were they hard?
A: Yes, they were very hard.
Q: What was the hardest part in solving them?
A: Finding the idea for the solution.
Q: Did you manage to finish them in time?
A: No, I didn't.
Q: Do you think this is the last time you will visit Romania?
A: I don't know, maybe. But I would like to come back here.
Well, that's great. Thanks for your time!

Bakuri Tsutskhashvili – contestant from Georgia

Q: Describe your country in a few words!
A: It's a very beautiful country.☺
Q: How was your journey to Romania? Did you face any difficulties?
A: Yes, the plane arrived late. But we managed.
Q: How do you find Piatra Neamt?
A: People are very nice here. Those gondolas are amazing.
Q: What have you done today at the contest?
A: I don't like my score but I will try better the day after tomorrow.
Q: What is your opinion about this contest so far?
A: It has been nicely organised!

Zoltán Gábor Molnár-Sáska – contestant from Hungary

Q: After five hours of competition is this trip beneficial?
A: Oh,yes…
Q: About today… How were the subjects?
A: Very difficult.
Q: I guess you expected something easier…
A: You are right.
Q: Did you have enough time to finish the tasks?
A: Unfortunately no. I worked hard on each issue separately and time was not on my side.
Q: I'm so sorry to hear that…but, if the first day of competition has passed, let's talk about this trip to Bicaz Gorges and to the Red Lake.
A: I really like the way the lake can be seen. This sight is delightful.
Q: I agree with you. And about Bicaz Gorges?
A: Wow…When you pass by the stones you have the feeling that they will fall upon you… they are amazing.
Q: They are really beautiful. Let's hope you will visit this place again.
A: I hope so.

Tim Poštuvan – contestant from Slovenia

Q: Did you enjoy the trips?
A: Yes, sure! These trips were the most interesting part. Romania and Sloveinia have the wildest vegetation. I love the zones with untouched nature.
Q: Which was, in your opinion, the most interesting part of the trips?
A: The water dam is breathtaking! It is fascinating to see how fast rivers in mountain areas turn those turbins and produce electricity. Iași is a very enjoyable city.
Q: What can you tell me about the contest subjects?
A: Hard! Very hard tasks.
Q: Which is your favourite programming language?
A: Definitely C++!
Q: Enough about informatics now!Tell me 3 things about Romania!
A: About Romania? Well, Dracula☺, the capital city – Bucharest, and the colours on the flag - red, yellow & blue.
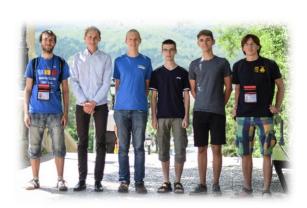
Interview with the Czech team

Q: Did you find the competition stressful?
A: Yes it was, mostly because we had to spend 5 hours to solve the problems.
Q: And my final question is, what do you think about our city, Piatra-Neamt after your first day spent here?
A: We were surprised by the architecture. It is very different from what we've seen before. It's a town full of high buildings. Also, we were surprised by the number of churches you have here. The thing that we really loved the most was the cable-car.

- Romania not only has rich gold resources but also hosts Europe's unique museum dedicated to gold.

- The Palace of Parliament from Bucharest, also known as People's Palace is the world's largest civilian building with an administrative function and the second-largest building in the world after the Pentagon in the US. It covers some 330,000 sqm.

- Romania is home to Europe's largest population of brown bears. According to a 2014 wild animal census, Romania's forests are home to some 6,000 bears. That is why, in some mountain areas, you may see bears searching for food through garbage dumpsters.

- The famous British auto show Top Gear shot one of its episodes on Transfagarasan in 2009, naming it "the best road in the world".

- Romanians enjoy some of the fastest internet speeds in the world. According to the Ookla Net Index, nine cities in Romania are among the top 15 cities in the world with the highest download speed of fixed broadband internet connections.

- Romania has one of the happiest and unusual cemeteries in the world. The Merry Cemetery, located in the village of Sapanta, in Maramures County, became famous due to its colorful crosses and the satirical poetry written on them.

- Romania is the ninth largest wine producer in the world.

- The archetypal vampire Count Dracula, created by Bram Stoker, was inspired by the Romanian prince Vlad Tepes, also known as Vlad the Impaler because he was fond of impaling his enemies.

- The Romanian language is 1,700 years old.

- The Romanian inventor Traian Vuia was the first European to build and fly a fully self-propelled, fixed-wing 'automobile airplane in March 18, 1906.

- Bucharest, and Romania itself, is one of the cheapest places to live, travel and visit in all of Europe.

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Tel/Fax: 00 40 233 227 510; 227 529; 223 252
http://cni.nt.edu.ro e-mail: cni_pn@yahoo.com

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