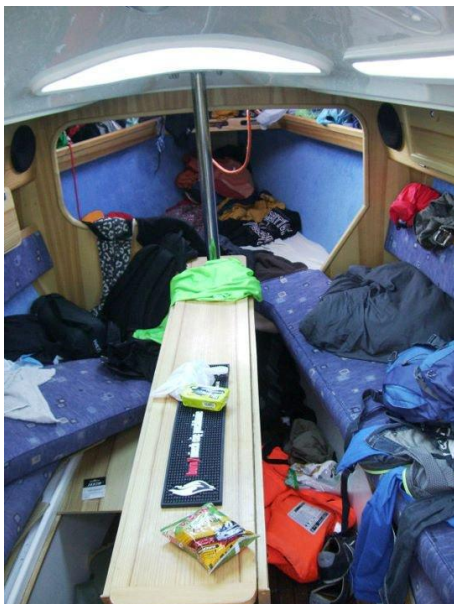


## Ahoy, ESTIEMers!

My own part in the LG Warsaw's sailing AW started much sooner than I had anticipated. As I had set off to drive through Eastern-Europe with one of my oldest friends, I noticed on the ESTIEM portal an exciting event in a country I had not been in before. I am of course talking about POLAND! As quickly as I could, I contacted my other old friends, Sylwia Buczek and Róża Wypych. At the time they were organizing a party for their own LG's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, but still they were more than willing to organize me and my friend some activities and to accommodate us. We stayed for a couple of nights in the beautiful city of Warsaw before leaving again southwards, but not before dropping off my "secret baggage" of Finnish tradition, "Minttu".



Over one and a half months had passed before I found myself back in southern Poland. As I was staying for the night in a small motel on the side of a small road, I found myself talking to two ex-students who used to study in Warsaw before graduating. While they were helping me with my booking, I told them that I was a part of this organization called ESTIEM and that I was going towards Warsaw for a sailing AW. Both of their eyes spread open and in a second they were singing the ESTIEM song! They had also been to the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary party with LG Warsaw and knew all the people I knew from there. It really is a small world.



I heard that LG Warsaw was waiting for all of the participants to arrive to start the AW with a small party at the city, so I stepped on the gas even harder. The "small party" turned out to be a combination of a water show in the park, walking and singing on the streets of Warsaw and then, of course, a good old club crawl!

As all of the participants had arrived the next morning, we could start our actual sailing AW. The bus drove us all the way up to Wegorzewo, a small town next to the amazing lake area. The LG had booked three sailboats for the whole group, which meant that there

were 8-9 people sleeping on each boat. At first we were sure that we'd never be able to fit that many people on one sailing boat, but then we figured out that we are actually engineers and more importantly ESTIEMers, after which we had no problem ;)

We had set sail in the lake district, which actually consists of four-five different lakes. The lake area seemed to be in high value amongst the Polish, as the lakes were filled with other sailboats. The agenda for the trip was organized perfectly, it really seemed as if they had been planning it for months. It consisted of 7 + 2 (arrival/departure) days with a program starting from 9 o'clock in the morning and ending at ... o'clock. The program was, of course, only *sailing!*



Though it wasn't always sunshine. Nothing ever is. We also witnessed great thunderstorms with rain pouring from every direction. They could be so horrific that even the bravest captains would rather hide in their 2x5 meter boats than face the open waters. I remember an evening when two of our boats were combating with the storm. Both us, and the storm, were trying to reach the harbor as soon as possible or at least that's what the storm seemed to be doing. I don't think the storm had much to lose, but thank the heavens we didn't have to find out how much we would have had :D Even more, the other boat was having a problem with their sword (the thing on the bottom to keep the sailboat balanced), which of course made the competition more interesting. ;)



The only thing I would have wanted for the organizers to put more effort in, were the dining arrangements. Sadly, we didn't have any common meals (once we were sailing), nor were we able to choose what kinds of foods we could prepare for ourselves. This was also partly the reason of bad weather (we couldn't make bonfires) and the tight budget because of the boat rentals, but wouldn't it be wiser to have a plan B? ;)

The most important cultural experience, personally, were the original Polish taverns full with "knowhow" sailors just like us. It wasn't the only thing connecting us to the locals though, as

we were more than happy to learn to dance to their traditional group songs, which were of course in Polish. It really was an experience that I wouldn't describe with words even if I could; it is an experience to experience ;)



In the end, after four different ports, seven days, an uncountable amount of taverns, pubs, clubs and some extremely exciting sailing methods, we finally arrived at the starting point. We had seen Poland in a way that not all are able to see it: *original*. Now I must also comment on the Polish food, if you enjoy fresh, salty, tasty, too-much-to-eat kind of foods with proper beer, then Poland is certainly for you!

If someone hasn't figured it out yet, I really enjoyed the Activity week that LG Warsaw and especially **Marta Szymanska**, Róża, the three Piotrs and Kuba had planned for us. And of course all of the other wonderful ESTIEMers who helped to create this one and a half week long party package, thank you!

Peter C. Bebek

