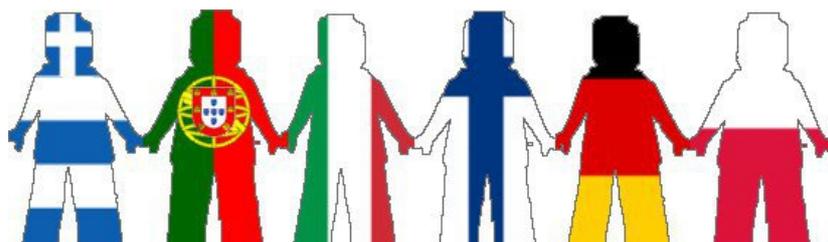


A Multilateral Comenius Project 2011-2013

The Development of Our Schools: School Identities in the Context of the European Integration



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"We are all citizens of one world, we are all of one blood.

To hate a man because he was born in another country,
because he speaks a different language,
or because he takes a different view on this subject or that,
is a great folly.

Desist, I implore you, for we are all equally human.

Let us have but one end in view,

the welfare of humanity;

and let us put aside all selfishness in considerations of language, nationality, or religion."

Amos Comenius (1592-1670), name giver of a lifelong learning programme of the European Commission

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The book cover was designed by Ms. Sandra Atanásio (Lisbon) and Mr. Moritz Berkemeier (Iserlohn).

The collages at the beginning of each section were taken from the "Creative Calendar".

Foreword

To learn is to change, and when in summer 2011 six European schools embarked on their Comenius adventure, this was to change everybody's lives.

The "multilateral Comenius project" had a topic that we had, even at our final meeting in Poland, difficulties to remember correctly:

"The Development of Our Schools – School Identities in the Context of the European Integration."

The sub-topics, however, were more practical, concrete, interesting – and easy to remember.

In spite – or perhaps because – of the challenging topic, the approx. 200 students directly involved in the project learned a lot, and deeply. They worked on aspects of school life that they had not been familiar with, or aware of, before. They gained new insights into a whole range of school-related topics through their own studies and the other schools' presentations.

Last but not least they had a first-hand experience of their host country, being part of a family for almost a week. They were not merely tourists, but guests, friends, and in countless cases, family members for a time. All the meetings during our visits, the formal as well as the informal ones, were charged with the thrilling atmosphere of intercultural encounters.

Teachers involved learned a lot too. One aspect of the experience refers to the way 30-odd individuals all worked together – digitally and, first and foremost, in the 'real' world. Throughout the different stages of our communication, from the initial contacts on TwinSpace, our first 'real', preparatory meeting in Iserlohn / Germany, the last team session in Poland to the very last digital communication about the final evaluation of the project and THIS final book, we got to know and to deeply appreciate each other. During our visits we talked a lot, during trips, meals, and staff meetings about the joys and sorrows of our lives as teachers, and, above all, we met as private human beings, too.

All our heads and colleagues, all the families, school communities and municipalities involved were part of what we participants called – perhaps a little proud – our "Comenius Experience". We are all grateful for, and aware of, the fact that taking part in such a wonderful project was and is a great privilege, and we hope that many students and teachers will be able to enjoy *their* Comenius Experience in the future, too. On our conflict-ridden continent it is now even more important than it has ever been before that people and people come together to promote "the welfare of humanity" (A. Comenius), growing together to become – small step by small step – a continent of respect, humanity and peace.

How much students learned and changed can be inferred from the reports, photos, statistics, students' voices and other materials.

This book is a compilation of what each school of our project contributed. Most of the materials used are self-made. In case a school used materials other than that, they did their best to protect the copyright. If there are any doubts about certain materials, one may turn to the legal representatives of the respective school.

Finally we'd like to express our sincere thanks to the Comenius teachers for their hard work and commitment throughout the project – first and foremost the school coordinators Federica Del Giorgio (Chiavenna), Despina Dimou (Volos), Anu Liikanen (Suonenjoki), Ana Luisa Melo (Lisbon) and Iwona Mucharska (Chorzów).

You made Comenius come alive!

Heinz-Dieter Klusmann (headmaster Gymnasium
An der Stenner Iserlohn)

Wolfgang Alkewitz (project coordinator, Iserlohn)

Iserlohn, June 2013

Programme

School life in past (25 years ago) and present

- Students' everyday experiences, e.g. food, music, fashion, sports
- School rules and values (written / unwritten)
- Special days and festivities, transition and graduation rituals (e.g. first class welcome, final class farewell), Open Day, Christmas season; the importance of these days for students
- The role of drama, music, sports etc. in school life

Languages in our school: in past and present

- Languages the students learn and their motives
- Changes in language teaching throughout the years (e.g. objectives, methodologies, books)
- Language certificates

Europe in our school in past and present

- School curricula, e.g. Social Studies, "European Education", History

Intercultural learning in our schools in past and present

- Exchange programmes / school trips etc.
- Dealing with stereotypes, e.g. in books, in personal contacts
- Meeting / teaching / experiencing other cultures (e.g. nationalities / religions) at school

Visions of our schools' European future: one generation ahead (in about 30 years' time):

- The kind of school our students would like their children to go to
- The way they imagine their children to learn / be taught (e.g. subjects, methods)

- **The Creative Calendar** (compiled by the school in Chiavenna)
- **The School Encyclopaedia** (compiled by the school in Suonenjoki)
- **The Students' Final Evaluation** (compiled by the school in Iserlohn)

Time schedule of our Meetings

Volos / Greece	15. - 19.11.2011
Lisbon / Portugal	28. - 03.03.2012
Chiavenna / Italy	23. - 27.04.2012
Suonenjoki / Finland	02. - 06.10.2012
Iserlohn / Germany	10. - 14.12.2012
Chorzów / Poland	08. - 12.04.2013

The Greek Comenius Experience



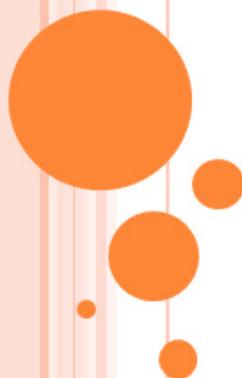
COMENIUS PROJECT



GREECE



Volos-Mousiko Sxoleio Volou



1st Mobility TOPICS in Volos, Greece

1. "Test About Europe" prepared by the Polish students; evaluation, presentation of the results
2. Write an **article** for our local newspapers (400-600 words + 2-3 photos) about our Comenius project so far.
3. Observe and describe the **typical day** of a Volos Music School student (**BOY**).
4. Observe and describe the **typical day** of a Volos Music School student (**GIRL**)
5. Do research on a **typical day at our school and 'the typical student' in the past**, i.e. about 25 years ago.
6. **What *are* and *were* the 'typical' Music School students like?**
7. Do research on **musical concerts in past and present** at our school.
8. Do research on the **theatre productions in past and present** at our school.
9. Do research on the **sports competitions in past and present** at our school.
10. This task will be carried out throughout the project (2011-13): Find **words which are typical of our school** and explain them in English. Write your word explanations (for the international project "School Encyclopedia") as a text.



The following students have participated in the 5 mobilities:

Lisbon, Portugal:

Filippou Eleni, Kotopoulou Eftychia, Mpatzika Chara, Mpatzkinis Michalis, Mpei Evaggelia

Chiavenna, Italy:

Golesi Myrina, Kortesi Eleni, Kontopanayiotis Yiannis, Lambrot-Xatzigeorgiou Sylvie-Ioanna, Mprizis Vasilis, Polyzos Filippos

Suonenjoki, Finland:

Kanana Petros, Mamali Chareklea, Pappa Eirini, Ventza

Dafne-Spyridoula, Yiannouli Maria

Iserlohn, Germany:

Fourkiotis Konstantinos, Mainou Androniki, Ntinou Iliana, Sterpi Georgina, Tsiakara Paraskevi

Chorzow, Poland:

Christou Anna-Maria, Nasioulas Viktoras, Nikolaidou Evaggelia, Panayiotopoulou Thaleia



Tuesday 15th November 2011

Arrivals, Accommodation.

For those arriving early, it will be a free day to rest, go around the city and get prepared for the following days.

Wednesday 16th November 2011

School day.

8.00 Attending classes.

13.30 Lunch at school.

Return to the hotel/ homes to rest.

17.30 At the school amphitheatre

'Comenius: Theory and Practice'. Concert. Traditional dances.

20.30 Official dinner for teachers at a traditional tsipuradiko, typical place in Volos with seafood.

Thursday 17th November 2011

Celebration Day

8.00 – 11.00 Work Session for Comenius teachers and students.

11.15 Celebration of the 7-year-junta Fall.

Lunch at school

Walking sightseeing tour along the seafront of the city for teachers and any students interested.

20.00 Teachers' Night Out at a tavern

Friday 18th November 2011

School day

8.00 Attending classes. Teachers' Work Session

10.30 Trip to Makrynitsa on Mt Pelion, visit the local Folk Museum

13.30 Lunch

16.00 Walk around the village, coffee, free time for shopping

Return to Volos to rest

Departure of Finland

Free time for Germany, Poland and Italy

Dinner with the teachers

Saturday 19th November 2011

Departure for Germany, Portugal and Italy.

Free day for Poland.

Lunch / dinner with the teachers

Sunday 20th November 2011

Departure for Poland

(The programme is subject to changes depending on the visitors' different departure time and the weather)

About Music Schools in Greece (Volos presentation)

It most certainly is a public school – Junior High/ High, which operates just like all other schools as far as curriculum, books, tests and hours of courses are concerned; the particularity lies in the ten hours of Music Education added to that.

Its purpose according to the Founding Law (3345/2.9.1998, article 1) is ‘to prepare and train the students who wish to pursue music professionally without lacking in general education if they decide to choose another field of professional expertise’.

Music Schools started their course in Greece in late 80’s on an experimental basis – the first was created in Pallini, Attica; today there are 34 all over the country.

Students are taught European and Byzantine Music Theory and Practice and 3 musical instruments – one *elective* e.g. *guitar, violin, saxo-*

phone, clarinette, bouzouki etc and two *obligatory* i.e. the *piano* representing European music, and *taboura* – a stringed instrument representing traditional Greek music. In some areas e.g. islands, the *mandolin* or the *lyre* are taught instead due to the local tradition.

Students are offered free *transport* to/from school and also *lunch* due to the long stay at school.

Students also participate in Music Ensembles, Choirs and Orchestras of various kinds of music. In this way they can all share time and experience of co-operation and collaboration towards common goals such as participation in all types of cultural events i.e. festivals, concerts, trips around the country or abroad, environmental programmes and plays.

It’s a school which promotes creativity, talents and sensitivity in artistic matters.

The history of the Volos Music School

In Volos, with a population of 144,449 1997. This year (2011) 420 students attend exams.



(2011), the Music School was created in its classes, selected after specific entrance

More specifically, there are 96 students in A’ Class, 81 in B’ Class and 86 in C’ Class of Junior High; respectively there are 63 in A’ Class, 55 in B’ Class and 39 in C’ Class of High School.

All three courses/directions are taught at school i.e. theoretical studies, exact studies and technological studies.

It got moved into its own building in 2007. Before then it was offered hospitality by the French Institute (1997-1999) and afterwards in a building owned by the Magnesia Prefecture (2000 -2006). Our new building offers a separate wing with studios for music teaching along with all the facilities which would make the life of a musician easier.



Important Hellenic School Days (Lisbon presentation)

11th of September, beginning of the new school year

A priest comes to school, does a holy water ritual and blesses students, teachers and parents for the new school year. After that, students are given sweets, get their school program and their new books and meet classmates and new teachers.



27th of October, the Flag Day

It's not a simple piece of cloth; it symbolizes everything our ancestors fought for, sacrificing their life and having lived by the values of Freedom, Democracy and Justice.



28th of October, National Day

On this day we commemorate with parades and many events the Greek soldiers who fought against the fascism in 1940.



17th of November, revolution against junta

On this day youngsters commemorate the Athens Polytechnic students who protested against junta in 1973 for "bread, education, freedom".



6th of December, St. Nicholas

St. Nicholas is the Patron Saint of the city of Volos.

23rd of December, Christmas Eve, Carols, bazaar and beginning of Christmas holidays

We sing the Christmas carols at school, downtown, and for charity purposes. At the same time groups of students organize bazaars at school and donate the money to institutions.



30th of January, the Three Prelates

Students and teachers go to church to celebrate the Three Prelates - Ioannis, Vasileios, Grigorios - whose holy life was devoted to Education and Letters and High Values.



16th February (Tsiknopemptie) Ash Thursday

The word derives from *tsikna*= the smell of the burning meat and *Pemptie*= Thursday, a day of joy and preparation for the Holy Easter. It's customary to eat meat on this day as it's totally forbidden for the next 40 days.

End of February, carnival

It is a 3-week period when students put on masks and/or costumes at school and play tricks on their classmates. Parties and parades are also organized.



27th February, Ash Monday

The end of the Carnival and the beginning of the Lent; a day devoted to spiritual and physical purification. People eat anything but meat – mostly seafood and vegetables, *laghana*, a special kind of bread; it's all about finishing up any leftovers from the period of carnival. It's the custom to celebrate the day by going to the countryside to fly kites - or try to, depending on the weather.

25th of March, National Day

On this day we commemorate with parades and events the Greek warriors who started in 1821 the revolution against the Ottoman Occupation. It's also a religious celebration for the Annunciation of the Holy Mother.



1st April, Fool's Day

Well, it's all about telling *white lies* – or so some people think believing that whoever manages to fool the other will have good luck for the rest of the year.

Easter holidays

Celebrating the sacrifice and the resurrection of Jesus – the most important day of the year for the Greeks all over the world. Food, as always, plays an important role that day – lamb on the spit, special dishes, red-dyed eggs and *tsoureki* – a special pastry.

1st May

A day of general strike to honor the working-class all over the Globe.



9th May, day of Europe

Devoted to the unity and peace amongst the countries of the European Union. In 1950, Robert Schuman, the French State Secretary, proposed the creation of a united Europe; it's when it all started.

21st May, Pan-Hellenic exams

The most important exam period for the Greek students as they sit for the exams which will define their future in many ways; they last for about two weeks – the most stressing weeks of their school life.

June 4th, Holy Spirit Day

Amongst Christians, Pentecost commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Twelve Apostles and other followers of Jesus.

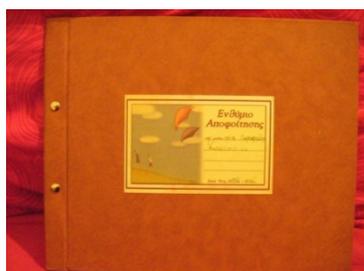
30th June, End of School Year

Finally! End of all kinds of exams, end of school life.

Parties and keepsakes for the ones who leave school for good.



Year Book



Research for School trips abroad

(Iserlohn presentation)



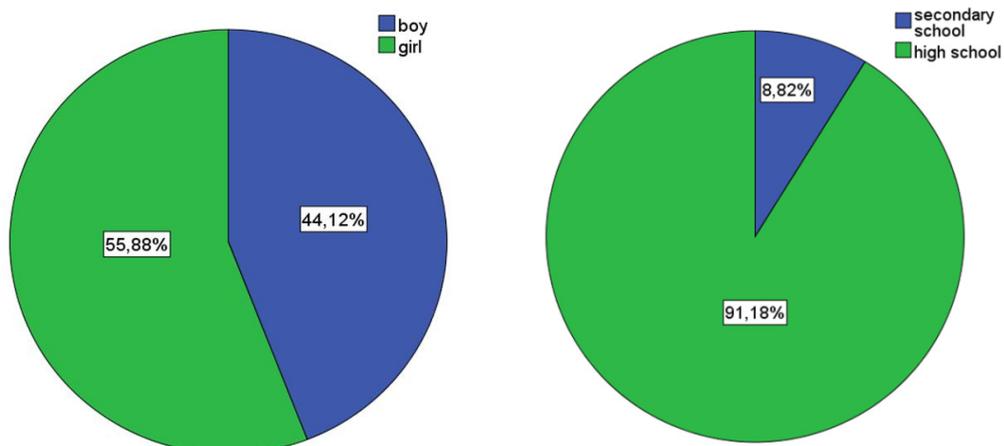
Our purpose

To define the motives for participating in special events, concerts and trips abroad of our school students.

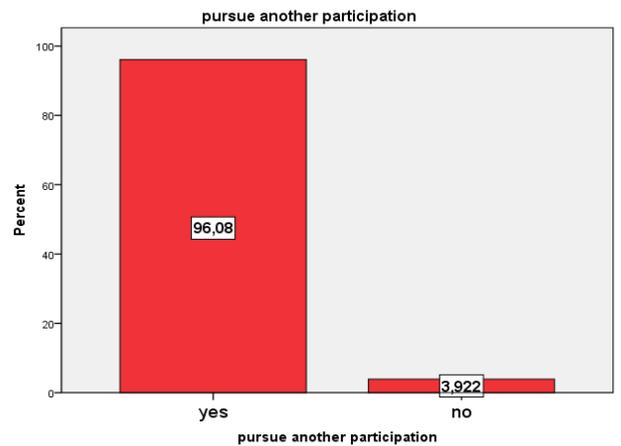
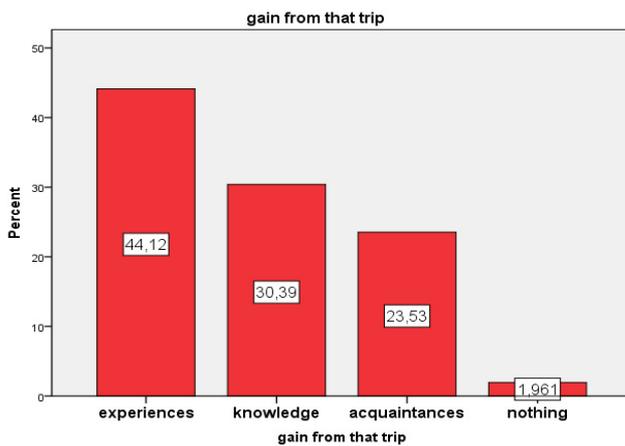
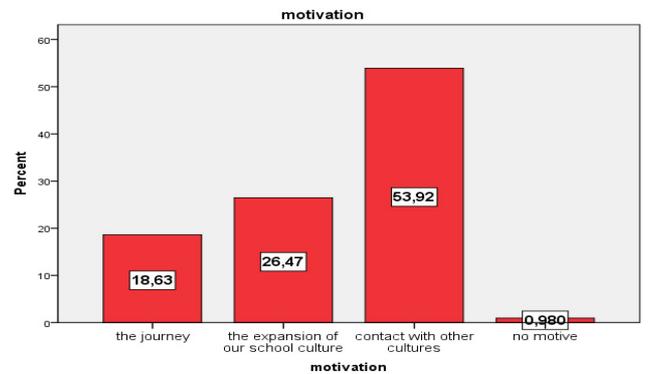
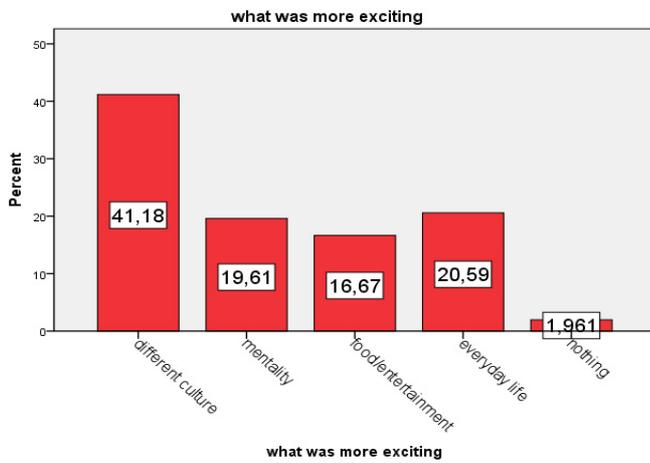
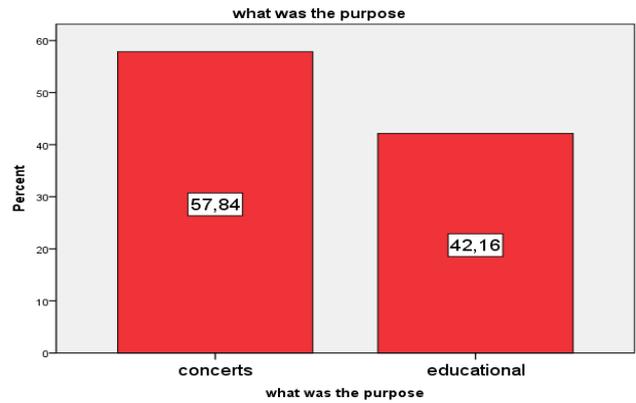
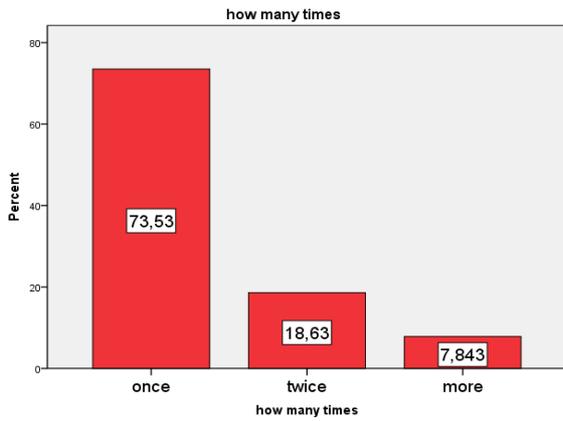
Method

- Created a questionnaire about the school trips abroad and distributed it among senior high and high students of our school
- Our sample was 102 students (N= 102)
- Software used: SPSS tool
- More specifically: frequency analysis and ANOVA

Samples



Results



Conclusion

There weren't any significant statistical differences ($p < .05$) among Junior high or High school students nor between sexes.

Discussion

- Students are very eager to travel abroad
- The most important motivation is the contact with other cultures
- Given the nature of our school, concerts are the major reason for travelling abroad

ΣΤΕΡΕΟΤΥΠΑ: Από τη Θεωρία στην Πράξη / STEREOTYPES: From Theory to Practice

(Suonenjoki presentation)

What does *stereotype* mean?

- The root of the word goes back to the Greek *στερεός* /*stereos*/ = solid, firm, steady, strongly-built, long-lasting, resistant, hardy and the word *τύπος* /*typos*/= type
- If we go further back, we'll find its Indo-European root and the connection with the ancient German word *Stara-blint* = blind...

What is a stereotype?

- Stereotypes can reflect real differences and identities between cultures or social groups. Acceptance of these cultural differences and identities may promote greater understanding among civilizations (*Ottati & Lee*)
- Stereotypes are a collection of qualities destined to define or characterize the members of a social group (*Oakes*)
- In today's cognitive world, stereotypes are just generalizations - for better or for worse. We have removed much of the historical fact from them and are not necessarily seen as sour or rotten (*D. Schneider*)

Meaning?!

- They can be positive or negative, heavy or light, funny or insulting, fair or unfair, rational or irrational, unjustified, inaccurate, improper, over-simplified, incorrect... used to create an image of the Other
- They are '*pictures in head*' (*W. Lippmann*)
- They act as a *filter*, as a defining element for thought, emotion and action, functioning as mental simplifications to recreate the world (*Ar. Tzanetopoulou*)

Are they useful?

A pattern of stereotypes is *not neutral*. It's highly charged with the feelings attached to them. It's a guarantee of our self-respect and the projection upon the world of our own position and our own rights. It's the fortress of our tradition, and, behind its defenses, we can continue to feel ourselves safe in the position we occupy (*W. Lippmann*)

What's the catch?

It is necessary to learn to regard stereotypes and images with self-criticism by being aware that we *can* modify them, by believing that they don't form part of rigid or persistent beliefs, but that they are only representations which are either totally inaccurate or form only part of the truth (*Ar. Tzanetopoulou*)

Any relation with *prejudice*?

- Of course, there is a *close* one; so close that very often these two terms get intertwined and confused.
- A *stereotype* is characterized mostly by knowledge whereas *prejudice* is characterized by emotion, entails a certain behaviour and, as most behaviours, it has many aspects.
- Of course, both have very deep political, social and cultural roots and they can both be the cause of racism, fear, irony and underestimation of the Other.

In school books

- Searching through textbooks - old, revised and new - we found out that in most literary texts there are references in the 2nd World War and the Italian and German Invasion...
- Even so, in some cases, Italians are very active, vivid, friendly, curious, cordial, noisy... Germans are strong, willful, inventive, domineering, persistent... Portuguese are pioneers, explorers, smiling and sad at the same time... Polish are patient, hard-working and, just like many other nations, have suffered a lot by their invaders...
- No references have been found for the Finnish nation...

Is it a choice?

- It always is!
- We could focus on the negative aspects of the human behaviour and its tracks and traits through history BUT
- We choose to care about what unites us, what brings people and peoples together, what creates bonds and happy memories
- This is OUR way to create history learning from the past mistakes.

“Once upon a time, *Europe*, the daughter of Agenor, and little sister of Kadmos, the King of Thebes, with whom Zeus of Olympus fell in love, gathered all her children and advised them wisely:

“You should never ever again separate... you should help each other and make sure you share all goods the earth provides us with equally...”

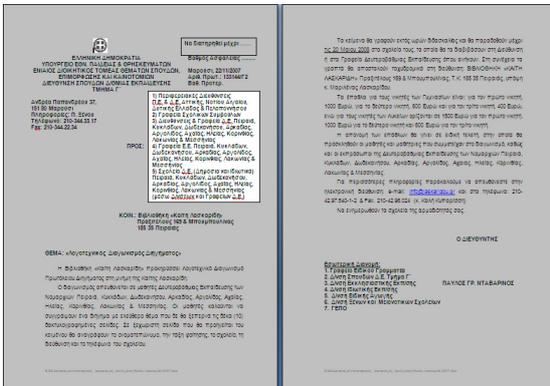
Guilty as charged

“We all use stereotypes, all the time, without knowing it. We have met the enemy of equality, and the enemy is *us*.” (Paul, 1998)



Certificates and Competitions (*Chiavenna presentation*)

This is how they reach us



And through email, of course!

Who's in?

The Ministry of Education offers numerous chances for participating into competitions of all kinds...

- Computer science
- Prose and Poetry
- Composition
- School newspapers & magazines
- Chemistry
- Biology
- Astronomy
- Languages

Music

- Each year concerts are organized including all genres of music; our school has been awarded first-place prizes in all categories. The main concert devoted to a famous composer and singer annually has become a well-known institution.
- Furthermore, the school has taken part in TV shows. Additionally, concerts have been held in foreign countries strengthening the Greek tradition beyond Greek borders.

Math

- Several Math competitions take place named after ancient Greek scientists like Euclid, Thales and Archimedes, in which our school participates every year with good results.
- The subjects are considered to be quite difficult. The best student represents Greece in the International Mathematic Olympics which is a competition amongst the young mathematicians from all over the world; several students have taken part and succeeded. Besides, it is known that Music and Maths are very closely related.
- The students agree that they are motivated by their love for Maths and the idea of challenging themselves since there is no special prize for the winner.



Science and New Technologies

- The EUSO (European Union Science Olympiad) Competition 2011-2012 took place in Athens. We had three participants, one of which won the first place nationally.
- 17th Pan-Hellenic Student Competition of Astronomy and Space Science 2012 includes three stages: 'Evdoxos', 'Aristarchus', 'Hipparchus'. The prizes are two; the first one is a trip to Rio de Janeiro in Brazil offered to the first five students and the second one is a prize of 50 to 300 E.



More participations

- 8th Pan-Hellenic Student Competition of Biology 2012 consisting of three stages.
- Astronomy and Space Company.
- 25th Pan-Hellenic Student Competition of Chemistry 2011.
- 21st Pan-Hellenic Student Physics Competition 2011.
- 3rd Pan-Hellenic Student Competition of Internet 2011-2012 with the aim of storing a site.

National Foreign Language Exam System

- The National Foreign Language Exam System (Kratiko Pistopiitiko Glossomathias - KPG) aims at measuring levels of competence or proficiency in English, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Turkish.
- The target of the exam battery is to assess candidates' ability to produce socially purposeful meanings in written and oral speech. The KPG exams are governed by the Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs, which, through its Department of Foreign Language Knowledge Certification, is responsible for administering the exams and for issuing the respective certificates.

Sports

- Table-tennis tournaments (single and double) often take place in our school gym.
- Volleyball
- Basketball Tournaments
- Football

These competitions take place every year in local stadiums.

- Hiking and Cycling along with other schools on Mountain Pelion especially in autumn and spring.



Playing politicians

Every year the Greek Parliament (Education Department) sets issues to be discussed by 300 2nd grade High School students selected based on written composition; they visit Athens as special guests of the President of the Parliament and for two days they act as Members of Parliament discussing and debating and suggesting solutions. It's considered a very important event widely promoted in the Mass Media; it certainly is an unforgettable experience for all participants.

Euroscola

Our school participated in the Euroscola program with 3 students and 1 teacher in March 2006.

It is a program held periodically throughout a year in *Strasbourg* for 4 days. Students from all member-countries of the European Union have the opportunity to learn about the institutions and the functions of the Union while acting as deputies – imitating adults, for better or for worse.

Furthermore, students discuss and criticize the system in the European Parliament - with the Heads of the Parliament present and attentive and, many times, apologetic, and get to know each other, at the same time having fun with their peers in a beautiful city.

Motivation

When participating in competitions we gain:

- Knowledge
- Experience
- Discernment
- Socializing
- Co-operation
- Entertainment
- Prize



Students' Voices

Daphne Ventza, 17, for Suonenjoki, Finland

"The Comenius Programme has been a real influence in my life in these two years it lasted. First and foremost, it gave me the opportunity to cooperate with my schoolmates and our teachers; second, to try harder for the best result of our efforts to be presented by our school, bearing also in mind that we played the ambassadors of our country abroad. It also pushed me into becoming more responsible for my actions and decisions. I volunteered in the Programme so as to offer as much as I possibly could to this huge effort and I gained a lot in experience, creativity and fun.

So I worked and after some time I was selected for the Finland mobility. Before the journey I was a bit cautious about all that experience so far away from home, and my first time abroad, but since the first moment we boarded on the plane my mind and my heart slowed down and I relaxed. It was a life experience and I had to make the most of it; I learned how to behave in a foreign country, how to communicate with people of different mentalities and different languages. I saw different places and another part of the beauty of nature. Apart from the trip itself, the time spent in Finland gave me the prospect of a different culture, in which I spotted both differences and similarities. Additionally, trying to conform to another way of life for a few days, having the opportunity to socialize through speaking English and exchanging views for various issues with other adolescents of my age from different areas all over Europe, I gained significant feedback. Regarding the people in Finland, and especially the family hosting me, what I received was love, generosity and never-ending effort to make me feel like home. Although, my 'parents' did not speak English, there was excellent communication between us and I realized that language is not an obstacle in human relationships if need be – and care and concern. We had so many similarities in the way of life that it was not difficult for me to live those days happily. I also noticed that teenagers in Finland and elsewhere have more or less similar aims and dreams in life.

I felt quite impressed by the structure of the school and all kinds of facilities available which make it so different from our educational system; amongst them, the flexible schedule, the lessons based on the pupils' needs, the way the lesson was made. I sensed easy relations between teachers and students and no need for discipline. This experience has filled my life with exciting memories and nostalgic feelings of sharing happiness, friendship, culture - and anxiety even, and I can say that it has affected my personality in many ways. I feel thankful to have shared such special moments at this age."

Georgina Sterpi, 17, for Iserlohn, Germany

"Well, this program that has already finished has been one of the most beautiful experiences of my life. It was not only an experience concerning culture of other countries, but mostly people. I met so many new friends from other countries with whom I share the same problems and interests.

The family that hosted me was amazing and made me feel like home because they were all so friendly and kind, despite the cultural differences - which were not as big as everyone would imagine. I met and dealt with cultures from five different countries in a few days, which sounds quite impossible, but it actually happened. I had the privilege of being both a hostess in Volos, Greece and a guest; it's amazing how much one can learn in just a few days! My country hosted the first mobility and we were all so excited counting the days with anticipation, so, naturally, I thought that those were the most noteworthy days of this Programme until I eventually met with my host family in Iserlohn. I did not want to leave (as everyone that took part, I'm certain) and I was so sad when it was time to leave them and go home. We shared amazing moments and even though we all were of different language and mentality, we could understand each other perfectly in an almost metaphysical way. Every single laugh, every single tear and hug was totally worth the effort and the fatigue, and I feel privileged to have been part of this Programme."

The Portuguese Comenius Experience

COMENIUS PROJECT



PORTUGAL



Lisbon - Escola Secundaria
Maria Amália Vaz de Carvalho





Some historical notes on our school

School Maria Amália Vaz de Carvalho has, from the academic year 1933-1934 been rooted in this building and has a long and rich history. It was created in 1885, occupying a building in Largo do Contador-Mor in Alfama, thanks to the initiative of the Municipality of Lisbon. It had as its main objective - broad social reach for the time "the emancipation of women through education," as it is stated in its first report.

Initially, it was called Maria Pia School, in honour of the Queen. There were 45 students enrolled, many of which, however, gave up. The reasons for dropping out seem to relate to its location, considered as the edge of town and difficult to access.

The School had an eminently practical tendency: needlework, printing, telegraphy and bookkeeping. However, both teachers and students have higher aspirations, even then countered by the "narrowness of the house."

The great ambition was to become a Lyceum. In 1906, finally, King Charles I signed the decree establishing the first female school in Portugal, with its building in Largo do Carmo.



From this moment on, the attendance kept growing, and in 1911, the Lyceum Maria Pia was transferred to the palace Valadares, in Largo do Carmo.

In 1917, by decree of the President of the Republic, Sidónio Pais, the school changed its name to "Central High School of Almeida Garrett."

The problem of the facilities remained unresolved and crawled over several years.

Finally, in the academic year 1933-1934, the Lyceum, for some years already called Female Lyceum Maria Amália Vaz de Carvalho, opens its new permanent premises in the present address. The Lyceum ceased to be exclusively female, starting to get gradually from the academic year 1975-1976, its first mixed classes. The framework of the teaching staff and administrative and ancillary staff, exclusively female, also widened to masculine elements. With the unification of Secondary Education, the School starts, as all other high schools in the country to be designated as Secondary School.

The growing number of students coming from various districts of Lisbon, requires the opening of a third shift. The school would also receive evening courses and 12th year in its two variants- the vocational and educational. Now the school has about 1200 students.

Open to students, the School is also open to professional training of their teachers. Here are made some of traditional teachers' trainings and also the educational trainings of the Faculty of Sciences, University of Lisbon and the Autonomous University.

Many former students of the Lyceum have today a prominent place in the Portuguese society, participating consciously in our school life through the exercise of various professions and activities.

A journey through Greece

On 15th November, a group of students and teachers went to Greece. Here are some Portuguese students' opinions:

"When I was selected to go to Greece, I was extremely excited. To visit a new country, meet people from different nationalities and make, if possible, new friends, was something I was looking forward.

However, there was something disturbing me...whenever I turned on the TV, there was always something on about Greece, and they weren't good things – crisis, rude and unhappy people and demonstrations, and that was exactly what I was expecting when I first arrived there...but I found out I was completely wrong.



Greece is a beautiful country, full of beautiful, loud, happy, joyful people! I made friends for life,

of that I'm sure, and I'm not only talking about the Greeks – I'm talking about the Italians, the Germans, the Polish and the Finnish!

I had such a great time, I can't possibly fit everything I have to say in 100 words, but I'll leave you with this – the Comenius project changed my life for the better."

"I don't even know where I should start talking about this amazing trip. Probably 100 words won't be enough to say everything but I'll try not to abuse the lines.

Although we only stayed for 2 days in Greece they were the best days of my life, meeting a new country, new languages and persons from different countries (Finland, Germany, Italy, Poland and Greece), it was just perfect. I learned so many things there, especially about TV, I learned that not everything is real, but it is too exaggerated, and I had proof of that in Greece, where people are always in a good mood and smiling, and not violent as it is shown on TV.

I can't write more, and all I can say is that I loved this experience and I hope to do this again, because I made friends forever that I want to see again so much."

Our experience in Italy

Our trip to Chiavenna

Mateus, Barbara, Filipa, André, Clara and I were the Portuguese team led by Ana Melo and Eugénia dos Santos (both our English teachers), chosen to take part in the international meeting which took place in Italy, more precisely in Chiavenna.

The main goal of this school trip was about globalization and getting to know other European cultures, in our case a friendly Italian one. The teams who presented the work there dealt with language certificates and other competitions, the presence of The European Union in school workbooks and the role of teachers and students in classes, in the present and in the past.



Maria Inês Catana

We spent a whole day to get to Chiavenna. And not spending more was really lucky because in Milan we almost missed the train due to some misunderstandings. But of course in the end all went well, because the group behind ran a lot.

The days we spent there were amazing and the programme was very rich and interesting (except the excess of historic visits to monuments and churches). I think the general Portuguese opinion is that the people from north Italy are very friendly and similar to us, although a bit more organized and disciplined.

In my opinion it was a wonderful experience. Even though we had some drawbacks such as Clara being away from us and the excess of visits, this trip really exceeded my expectations.

In the end I really believe that it was a good way to improve my knowledge and to expand my approach to different cultures.

My experience in Italy!



Barbara Oliveira

The whole experience of Italy is unexplainable. I really don't know what to say so that you will understand it but I will do my best. Well, to begin with, it was an amazing experience where we learned a lot of different things.

The trip to Chiavenna itself was exciting. We almost missed the train, and we had to run with our suitcases across Milan's train Central station; it was very funny after all. At the beginning we thought that it would be very boring because

Chiavenna was a small, calm town and we are used to the big, noisy city of Lisbon. But it turned out to be the opposite. There wasn't a day or night we didn't have something to do! At least for the most of us, because one of my colleagues stayed with a girl, who lived far from the centre so she didn't have the opportunity to be with us in the evening, only during the day.

One thing we noticed a lot was the fact that they spoke a very bad English, not only the Italians but also the Finns and the Greeks. Without being cocky, I think the Portuguese along with the Polish were the best English speakers. However, we understood each other easily; and if we didn't, we would communicate through signs. Just like the whole family of the girl, with whom I stayed did, because none of them knew how to speak English.

I really loved her and her family; they were extremely kind and I really felt welcomed. It was a rewarding experience, where we got to know new cultures and made friendship abroad.

Chiavenna

After a nice flight from Lisbon, which we took at 7 a.m, we arrived at Malpensa to head to Milan, in an express, where we arrived (at the central station) after around half an hour later. Before getting on another train, Filipa and I had enough time to visit Duomo, the main attraction in Milano, which is a giant and absolutely stunning cathedral.

By the time we arrived at Chiavenna, around 5 p.m, the girl I was going to stay with and her mother were already waiting for me. Once they lived in Madesimo, a small town on the mountains, we left immediately heading home.



Clara Catarino

During the car drive, I noticed it was snowing, which happened all night long in Madesimo. Finally at home, I watched films until dinner time.

On the second day and already in Chiavenna, after a 45 minute bus trip, we met everyone for an introduction to the school/village and a walk around the school, which is much smaller than ours. Before having lunch in the canteen, I met the rest of the Portuguese team to attend some classes. After lunch, the whole group visited Chiavenna, stopping at a church and also a magnificent garden, Parco Paradiso, from which we had a beautiful view over the small town surrounded by mountains. After that, all of the students went to a restaurant/bar, where we exchanged ideas and experiences. Then, I went home with Valeria, the girl I was with.

We all met at the train station early in the morning on the third day, to get on a train to Varenna. When we arrived, we found Varenna, a charming small town by the lake (Lago Como), with small

buildings and a calm atmosphere. We spent the morning there and then we caught a ferry to Bellagio, an island, as amazing as Varenna. Besides walking around and shopping for souvenirs, we visited an incredible garden there; a magical garden falling from heaven in the middle of the mountains by the lake - absolutely beautiful! We took the ferry back to Varenna and then headed to Chiavenna, where Valeria's parents were waiting for us to take us to Madesimo and have dinner at a very good pizzeria.

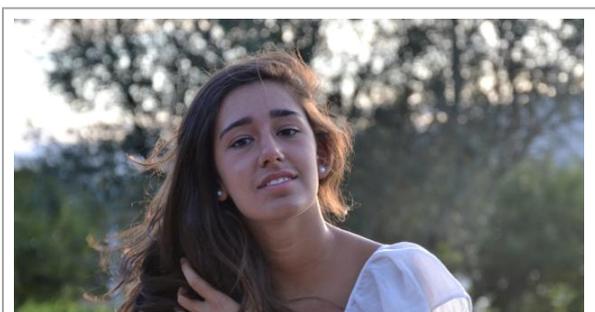
The fourth day was the so much feared presentations day. Portugal was the first one to present their work. Although we were pretty scared everything went well. By the time all the presentations were over, the group sang together in a funny moment of partnership. We had lunch at the canteen again and then we visited a palace and beautiful waterfalls. It was an incredible walk, but also very tiring, especially because it was really hot on that day. After a while in that bar next to the train station, I and some other students went for a walk around Chiavenna and later, Valeria and I had dinner in a very nice pizze-

ria, before going to the party the Italian guys had set up for us. It was very funny!

The fifth day we started attending some classes and exchanging our opinions from the experience with each other. The Portuguese group decided to go for a farewell walk around Chiavenna, since we were leaving that morning. Coming back to Lisbon wasn't as calm as the trip to Italy: the plane was delayed, so we had to wait at the airport and inside the plane for hours. But, in the end we arrived well.

To sum up, this was an unforgettable experience, where I saw some of the most amazing landscapes I've ever seen, but more importantly I met incredible people, who aren't that different from us. We all share the young spirit, the hunger for adventure and the scare (but also the hope) for the future. The only drawback that was the fact that my host lived in Madesimo, so I couldn't be with the rest of the group all the time, particularly when they met in the evening. But that didn't matter that much after all. What I keep from all of this is that it was just amazing!

My visit to Chiavenna, Italy



Filipa Carvalho Dias

On April 23, the Portuguese team went to Chiavenna, in Italy, and started an amazing trip that was outstanding for all of us.

We caught the plane in Lisbon and we went to the Malpensa airport and then, by train we went right to the center of Milan.

I loved Milan. While the teachers and the rest of the students were at the train station, my friend Clara and I took the underground and went to see the amazing "Duomo di Milano". It was really

quickly because we didn't have much time, but it was worth it.

Then we caught the train to Chiavenna. There we were welcomed by our hosts.

On that day I met Giulia's family, which was absolutely amazing, and also some other students from the project.

On April 24, we visited the school, participated in classes, walked in Chiavenna. We visited "Mulino di Bottonera", "Parco del Paradiso", "Castello", "Collegiata", "Palazzo Salis", "Via Dolzino", "Piazza Pestalozzi" and "Portonne di S. Maria". On that day I had lunch at Giulia's grandparents and had dinner at some pub, with many Comenius guys. After dinner we danced a little bit and then we went home. I was exhausted in the end of the day, but I had a really great time.

On April 25, we visited "Varenna", "Bellagio", "Lake Como" and "Villa Melzi" gardens. I think this was my favourite day. I've seen the most amazing landscapes, eaten the greatest pizza and

visited amazing little shops and streets ever. I was really impressed and surprised by everything, especially for Bellagio and the garden. Later I had lunch in Giulia's house, not only with the family, but also with many friends of hers, most of them from the Comenius.

On the next day in the morning we had the presentations of the activities and in the afternoon we visited the Vertemate palace and the "Aqua Fraggia Falls". The palace wasn't overwhelming but the waterfalls were amazing and absolutely imposing. In the evening we had the Comenius party, and honestly I had a great time there.

On April 25, we participated in some classes and then we said goodbye to everybody and returned to Lisbon.

I have to say that I was incredibly well hosted by Giulia and her family, because they couldn't have made me feel better.

All I want to say about this trip is that I met people that I will never forget; I had experiences I can't really explain how enriching and amazing they were; I saw the most beautiful places I have ever visited.

One of the things I love the most in my life is travelling, and this trip hasn't disappointed me at all. In fact, I think that these experiences are the most important of our lives, because we are able to see new things, meet new people, experience other cultures, and learn, learn a lot.

Trip to Chiavenna – a global perspective, by André Saraiva

This text is a reflection on my trip to Chiavenna and my vivid experiences there as a Comenian student.

Our arrival in Italy, the contact with the Italian people and their culture were very exciting. Everything went on as scheduled. At Chiavenna, we finally met our European Comenius partners and it was kind of a thrill.

The most expected day came! It was the day I had to present to all the community the project work developed in Portugal under the heading "Project Website". All the Comenian students did their project work – all of them – on education and focused on the role of the teacher and students in their own countries. Other presentations came along, and these ones were related to lan-



guage certificates – reasons for issuing them - and competitions held in schools.

All the participant students showed how English course books approached the theme "The European integration" and the relevance of this theme in the past and today. We concluded that there was a change in contents and that The European Integration is only taught to A-level students, those who are studying English as a core subject.

Finally, I would say that this mobility was really fun. Everybody was very friendly and nice. I would also like to highlight that this project was important to me since it allowed me to know other European realities.

And finally Mateus' point of view



Mateus Loureiro

Our trip to Chiavenna was a wonderful experience, although it was for a very short period of time, only four days. To get there, we went by train for a couple of hours and had the opportunity of see-

ing the beautiful landscapes of the north of Italy. When we arrived we saw this beautiful village in the middle of the mountains, with its old buildings, river and gardens.

The family I stayed with was very nice. They were all very kind. The house was a two minute walk to school, and therefore we went home for lunch every day. The school was relatively small, com-

pared to ours. However, it was in a modern building, and the premises were fantastic.

One of the things I enjoyed the most in attending the lessons of my hosts was that, rather than having an ordinary lesson, as our Comenius colleagues had in Portugal, we were invited by the teacher to share our experiences with the class

Our experience in Finland

After a year of hard work, we finally got to travel with the COMENIUS Project. And where else but Finland? That's right, a ten hour journey to get to the small town of Suonenjoki.

First Impressions? Honestly, when we arrived, we thought we were going to be killed by a serial killer. It was a dark and isolated place, right in the middle of the forest, with no signs of Human activity. But we soon saw its true wonder. A simple landscape, breathtaking, like the ones we see in magazines, and simple people: humble and friendly.



Our first day began with "ice breaking" games, for everyone to meet a bit more properly. Strangely enough, we were already having lunch by 10 in the morning so we could present our assignments about Stereotypes. This was actually a very interesting moment. We all shared our thoughts and laughed about the obvious mistakes.

After this, we all headed home with our hosts.

The next day, we had two classes (in Finnish, of course): Geography and Math. However, we were all dreaming about the big adventure that would follow: the sauna.

and to discuss the differences among the various countries involved in this project.

Being in Italy, pizza and pasta were, needless to say, a "must have" on a daily basis.

After all, I really appreciated having been given this opportunity to improve my English and to travel abroad meeting new people and experiencing different cultures.

We arrived to a chapel – or we think it was a chapel – in the middle of a forest, and we immediately saw an astonishing lake. We were given the feedback of our presentation and learnt a few words in Finnish. Then, we went to a campfire and we roasted sausages (which were delicious, by the way). And to end that great day... we went to the 80°C sauna and went for a dive in the freezing lake! We were obviously nervous, but it ended up being an unforgettable experience. We recommend it to everyone.

And we got to the third and final day, which we spent in Kuopio, another city, close to the one we were staying in. In the early morning, we visited a museum with various expositions – the XIX century, pre-historic animals, among others.

After lunch, we had a few hours to shop and next we went glowbowling.

We went home after the short game and prepared ourselves for the farewell party they organized. Unfortunately, it ended quite soon, since we had to leave in the early morning.

And the morning did come, and we were all ready to come back home. But we left with heavy hearts, fearing we might never see those people again. All goodbyes are difficult, and this was no exception. We will never forget those students who took us in and the ones that were taken in, just like us. We made many friends and they will never leave our hearts. And neither will the memories we made together fade with time. We hope to go back to Finland someday.

Thank you for reading this.

The Portuguese version of the trip to Iserlohn

1st Day

The journey didn't start very well because Leonor was 45 minutes late and we were afraid that we could miss our plane. When she finally arrived we were relieved but suddenly Leonor realized she had lost her ID. Luckily we found it and the rest of the trip was good. We spent some time in the airport visiting some shops and chatting. Shortly before we entered the plain and took our seats, Carmo lost her contact lenses. In general the trip was amusing and comfortable. And finally we arrived in Germany.

WELCOME TO GERMANY!



When we landed, we went to meet the car driver who was supposed to take us to Iserlohn. Unfortunately he wasn't there and our group had to split to look for him. When the boys found him we could start our road trip to Iserlohn, which took about one hour and a half. We arrived our destination at 4 pm and we went home with our exchange partners to meet their houses and their families, and we spent the rest of the day with them.

2nd Day

We arrived really early at school to meet up with the other Comenians and start our tour guide through the city. In our general opinions the city was really beautiful with loads of interesting places including the Christmas Market. During the tour guide we took many photographs and Roman started a snow ball fight with the rest of the

Portuguese group, which ended up being very funny and joyful.

Later on we started our presentations to the other Comenians. Our presentation was the most interactive. Between the paper presentations we had a break and we ate at the school cafeteria. The lunch was very good and a good opportunity to chat a bit more. Then the rest of the presentations took place which included ours and the Germans'. At the end of all presentations we took a group photo with all the Comenians (students and teachers) and the school gave us some souvenirs.

Shortly after we left school and went with our exchange partners to the Christmas Market which was very nice. We ate their traditional sweets, giant gums, and drank their traditional glühwine.

We spent the rest of the day with our hosts.

3rd Day

We met rather early to catch a bus that was going to take us to Bonn. In Bonn we visited the German National History Museum which was very instructive.

Then we moved on to Cologne to visit the biggest cathedral in Europe. The cathedral was amazing and really beautiful. We learnt so much about its design and its history. After the tour guide we had lunch at McDonald's where we stayed for one hour. Then we visited the Cologne Christmas Market where Roman suggested that we should climb all the way up the cathedral tower, and so we did. It was a bit tough but in the end it was totally worth it, because the view was breathtaking. We were the only group who did this.

In the road trip back we had a lot of fun and socialized with the other Comenians.

The night as usual was spent with our hosts.

4th Day

In the morning we had an English class with older students, which was a bit boring, but then we had another English class with children and they were really sweeeeeeeet.

After this we had an evaluation and we did a group work in which we had to answer a questionnaire about the advantages and disadvantages of the journey and the differences between countries. We were organized in six groups and each group had at least one element from each country. When the presentations were over we had lunch at the cafeteria but this time we didn't like very much the food because of the tomato sauce.

Then we caught the train to Dortmund so we could visit the biggest Christmas tree in the world and the Christmas Market there, where we also bought some things.

When we finished our visit to Dortmund we came back home with our partners by train as well.

At night we went to a party organized for the Comenians (which ended up being in the same day as the birthday of the German girl, Kim) where we had so much fun and we danced a lot.

5th Day

This was the saddest day of all because we had to say goodbye to everyone really early. We met in school in the morning and then the same car driver took us back to the airport. When we arrived in Düsseldorf airport we had some problems, like finding where to check in and with Leonor losing her ID again, but we solved them all. Then we went to buy the last souvenirs and waited to get on the plane. After taking our seats we

chatted a bit but most of us fell asleep due to how tired we were from the intense week. The flight was nice and we just wanted to turn around and go back to Germany again.

We arrived in Portugal around 4pm and we went to pick up our luggage. While we were waiting for our things we took the last photographs together. We met our families and said goodbye to everyone. It was hard to see our group separate but we knew that we weren't going to lose our friendship even though most of us are in different classes.

Conclusion

It was a wonderful trip, that gave us the opportunity to create and strengthen friendship bonds not only with the foreign Comenians but especially with the Portuguese group. We've become very close to one another. It was a lifetime experience that we'll never ever forget.

we love our teachers and we're very grateful for everything they did for us

Written by:

Gonçalo Breia

Inês Morais

Leonor Burnay Barros

Luana Hanysz

M^ã do Carmo Sacchetti

Roman Barchuk

Last but not least - Poland

And the best way to let you know what we saw, did and learned in Poland if not with our Comenian students' opinions...



Ricardo Xavier

What I liked most in this experience were the contacts we made with the people from other countries.

They became very good friends and we had a very good time.

We shared our knowledge and culture as well as they did.

We learned many things about their habits and costumes as well as the differences from Portugal.

We also learned a lot of words from their different languages.

Someday we'll meet them again in our or their country.

Carolina Castro

My experience in Poland was truly unforgettable, and it exceeded my expectations in many levels. From the very beginning, we noticed how different everything was, from the way everything looked, the beautiful buildings or the snow melting on the ground, to how everyone behaved, more distant and quiet but humble and polite towards each other.

I can't say that I had a favorite moment, because I really enjoyed every second of it. I loved the food, I loved the new places, and I even loved the little handshake greeting. I really liked meeting new people from all the countries involved in Comenius, but more than anything, the Polish people, for the way they could make us feel welcome from the very moment we got there until the last day. It was a wonderful experience that I know I'll remember all my life.

Mónica Silva

Well, so much to write and so little available space. How should I start? I think that the best way to start is saying how unique and special this experience was.

Above all, I loved the experience of going to Auschwitz. Being there, in that place where thousands of people were killed; feel on the skin what those people must have experienced (although, it is not possible to compare these two situations), is something that you can't explain, it is something that makes us think and really affects us.

In Poland, what I felt more was the innumerable differences between these two countries, which, despite being on the same continent, are so distinct. From education, through diets and schedules, to the social rules and character. From all of those, what really impressed me was the way of being of the Polish people: more closed, less "smiling", more distant. The fact that they stretch out their hands to greet someone, which caused me some confusion, illustrates well what I have mentioned earlier. Regarding the character and way of being, I realized that the Portuguese peo-

ple were more like the Italians and Greeks than with the others.

Despite everything, of all the differences and small problems, this week was a great life experience that has served to broaden our horizons and to meet new realities. I loved, I really loved it! "Papa!"

Rita Branco

The whole experience of visiting Poland was unique to me. Everything seemed so magical, starting when we arrived and there was snow everywhere, something that is not usual in Lisbon. When we first visited the school, the students prepared us a welcome ceremony which was really thoughtful of them and I enjoyed it a lot, it was also when I met the other people from other countries that are also in the project, it was really fun.

My favorite moments in Poland were visiting Auschwitz, which was a really meaningful experience to me, visiting Krakow, which is a stunning city where they sell this type of cakes called obwarzanek in the street, I tried one and it was delicious! In general I really enjoyed Poland, everything was pretty different but nice at the same time, polish people are very polite and respectful, also very organized. I would definitely come back to get to know more about Poland.

António de Gusmão

How to describe such a unique experience? How to put into words what I always considered indescribable? It was perfect, I can't say much more than that, but because my teacher asked me to, I'll try to get into more detail with the risk of not being able to describe it properly and underrating the whole experience.

Let's start with the people: So nice! Everyone was nice! Everyone (and when I say everyone I mean everyone (at least the ones I remember of) had a smile on their face, all the time! We were received astonishingly well, we didn't have the time to be unhappy. Everyone was so thoughtful and sweet.

But there was something that wasn't sweet, the streets, the city. I'm not saying this in a bad way, I loved the city and the environment. As we walked down a street we could easily distinguish the old, historic buildings that were usually in shades of red, from the new, somewhat boring, tall buildings. This contrast gave the city life. So, although the city wasn't sweet like Paris or Rome, it was unique and very enjoyable.

So for me there wasn't anything bad, we were in a great environment, surrounded by great people. The only thing I can nag about is the fact that we weren't there for long enough.

Rafael Venâncio

My polish experience provided by Comenius.

My experience in Poland allowed me to absorb a different culture other than mine. I was able to find some routines I was used to and others a lot different. The biggest problem was not the cold or the snow, it was the food, I know I love bread but they a lot of sandwiches with a lot of butter and vegetables. The other was the time they ate: breakfast at the same time as we do, but then lunch was between 11-12am and dinner at 3 or 4pm.

The views and landscapes were beautiful and the polish person takes a simple life, they look always angry but they are actually very nice people and

very hospitable. I am really glad I could enter this journey since it was the first time I left Portugal and it was a very good experience, which I wish I can repeat in the future.

Simão Loureiro

My trip to Poland was simply amazing, since the day we arrived until the last one!

As I got to Chórzow my host's family were really kind with me always worried about my welfare.

During that week we made a lot of new foreign friends and some bus trips to shopping centres, cultural cities and historical places that I really enjoyed!

In the end I was really grateful for those awesome days!



Sweat and smiles

It was not only travelling and making new friends it was hard work too. We spent many hours doing researches to fulfill our goals in every Comenius meeting. We made many movies but we couldn't put them in here so we leave you with our best advice "take part in exchange programmes". Enjoy ! 😊



- * To improve your CV;



- * To travel for free and with friends;

- * To meet new people (from other countries and from our school);



- * To live new experiences;

- * To understand and discover new cultures/ viewpoints / customs;



- * To practise/improve a foreign language;

- * Family/friends' influence



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Some students' testimonies- students who have already participated in exchange programmes

Clara Catarino said...

- * "My sister had already attended a similar project in another school, so I knew how it worked. ... When my English teacher told me that there would be one at this school too, I immediately said I wanted to sign in."

Filipa Dias said...

- * "I think that travelling is the best thing in life, so when I was informed that I had the opportunity to do it with Comenius, I signed in."
- * "At the same time I met a lot of new people from different nationalities and interacted with other cultures. I think it only brings good things. I've already been to Italy with Comenius and it was one of the best things I've ever experienced. It was amazing!"



Inês Morais said...

- * "I joined the Comenius's project because I thought it was a great opportunity to practise and improve my English, meet new people not only from other countries but also from our own school..."
- * "It's a way of getting to know other cultures and see other points of view. I think it's an excellent project and the work is always interesting and creative."



Carmo Sacchetti said...

- * "I joined the project because I love English and I thought it would be interesting to participate in something like this. Besides, it is always good to know other countries, understand cultural differences and bring memories of people we met while we were there. It teaches us so much!"
- * "I think the Comenius's project is not only an interaction between schools and countries but a whole range of learning and experiences for life that makes us grow up as people."



Luana Hanyasz said...

- * "As my dream was to know Germany, joining the Comenius's project was an opportunity to fulfill it and have a unique experience that I will remember for the rest of my life."



Gonçalo Breia said...

- * "It is the fact that you can meet other people and see new countries! It is the idea of travelling that comes to your mind!"

Jefferson Silva said...

- * "It is the pleasure of getting to know new places, new people, other cultures. And also the language of the country (Spanish)."



Maria Ferreira said...

- * "It is nice to discover new customs, new cultures, learn the language..."

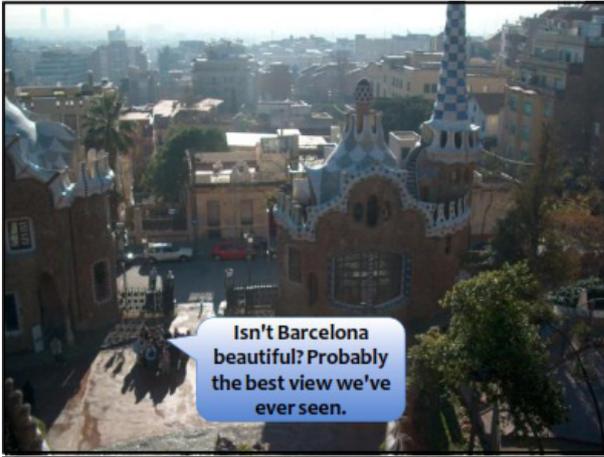
Visited places...

History of Art

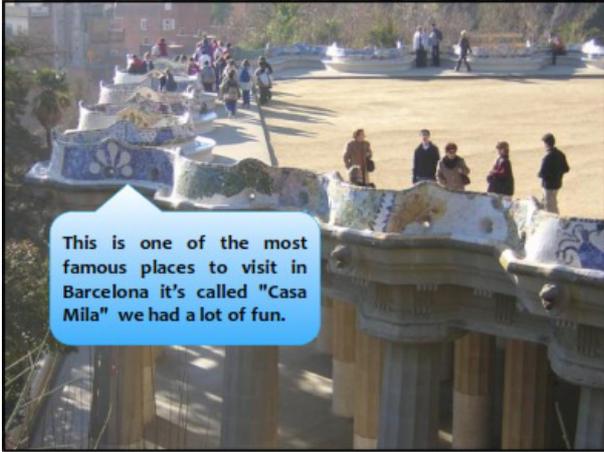
- * 2000: 12th grade students went to Rome, Florence, Naples, Italy;
- * 2004: Paris, France;
- * 2006: Barcelona, Spain;
- * Every year since 2004, students go to Mérida, Spain;

Barcelona (Spain) -2006





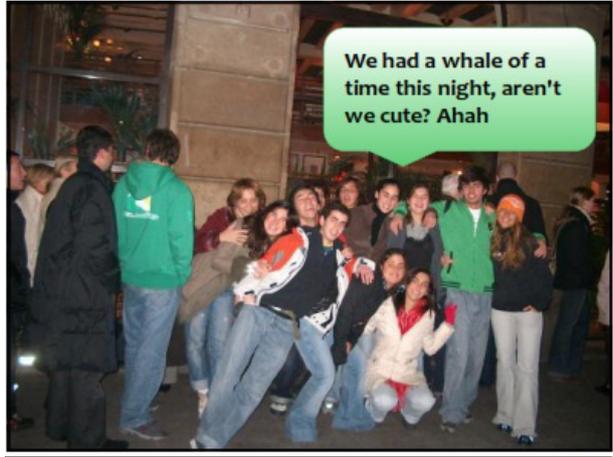
Isn't Barcelona beautiful? Probably the best view we've ever seen.



This is one of the most famous places to visit in Barcelona it's called "Casa Mila" we had a lot of fun.



Paris (France) - 2004



We had a whale of a time this night, aren't we cute? Ahah

2006

"Whenever I think about cultural experiences that I have already shared, it always pops out the trip that I made with my schoolmates to Barcelona.

Spanish is a language that has always caught my interest, and when the opportunity to go to Spain appeared I immediately knew that I would have to be part of it because I knew that the experience was going to be unforgettable. And guess what... I was right.

Besides others, one of the main advantages was my huge improvement of speaking Spanish; talking to natives really helps to improve the language you want to speak. Although this trip was absolutely phenomenal, it had one disadvantage: it ended too fast! We only had money to stay there for four days, and trust me, the end came too fast, unfortunately."

Sofia Mendes, 16 years old





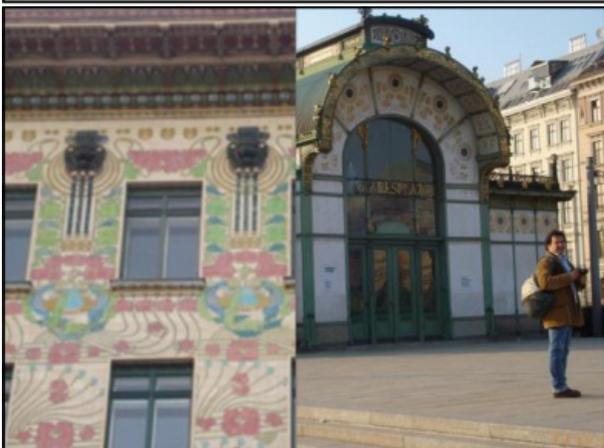
2010

"Going to France was one of the best experiences I've ever had. In fact I do not remember any drawback that it might had. From meeting new people to an entirely new culture, I think that the best part of it was the opportunity that I had in living with a "real" French family. With this experience, I understood how important an exchange programme is to young people like us, not only because it is a great way for us to adapt to a variety of different situations other than the ones we are used to, but also because it helps a lot improving our French."

Renato Alvarez, 18 years old

Philosophy

- 2002: Barcelona, Spain;
- 2012: Vienna- Austria, Bratislava- Slovakia





Merida (Spain) – since 2004

What a big head!
Merida has a cool museum.



Road trip!



Somewhere historical in Mérida



Volos (Greece)-2011

2011

"When I was selected to go to Greece, I was extremely excited. To visit a new country, meet people from different nationalities and make, if possible, new friends, was something I was looking forward to.

However, there was something disturbing me... whenever I turned on the TV, there was always something on about Greece, and they weren't good things – crisis, rude and unhappy people and demonstrations, and that was exactly what I was expecting when I first arrived there...but I found out I was completely wrong.

Greece is a beautiful country, full of beautiful, loud, happy, joyful people! I made friends for life, of that I'm sure, and I'm not only talking about the Greeks – I'm talking about the Italians, the Germans, the Polish and the Finnish.

I had such a great time, I can't possibly fit everything I have to say in a small answer, but I'll leave you with this – traveling with my school changed my life for the better."

Mariana Fernandes, 16 years old



Italy 2012



2012

"Last year I made part of a school trip to Italy within this project. First I was very pleased when I found out that I was one of the students chosen to be part of this group because it was going to be really nice and secondly because I have always loved Italy and Italian culture.

For me this was an experience which exceeded my expectations and helped improving my cultural knowledge. I believe that a school trip like this one is very important to the students, as those who haven't participated don't fully understand it- the culture approach to everyone else that you feel is something that stays with you for a long time, and I'm sure that this feeling isn't something that you can easily find."

Maria Inês Catana, 16 years old

French Language European Section

- * 2009: Compiègne, France;
- * 2010: Compiègne, France;
- * 2011: Compiègne, France;

Theatre

- * 2007: Madrid, Spain;
- * (uncertain date): Marselha and Paris, France;

Work Done by:

- * Bianca Carvalho
- * João Breia
- * Luana Hanyasz
- * Rita Monte
- * Mónica Silva
- * Sara Ribeiro
- * Ricardo Xavier
- * António Ausmão
- * Carolina Castro
- * Mateus Loureiro
- * Mariana Fernandes
- * Maria Inês Catana
- * Luís Benedito
- * Simão Loureiro

The Italian Comenius Experience

COMENIUS PROJECT



ITALY



Chiavenna - Istituto D'Istruzione
Superiore "Leonardo Da Vinci"



Chiavenna - - Italy



ISTITUTO D'ISTRUZIONE SUPERIORE "LEONARDO DA VINCI"



Istituto Tecnico Commerciale, per Geometri e Liceo Scientifico

Via Bottonera, 21 23022 - CHIAVENNA (Sondrio)

Oh, softly blew the mounting breeze
Through Chiavenna's myrtle trees,
And o'er the green hills' viny spread,
That rose in many a rounded head
Beneath the Alpine rocks of red.
And the fresh snow had fall'n that night,
And sprinkled with its mantle white
The mountain-amphitheatre
That rose around us far and near,
Though in such far confusion hurled
They looked to rule o'er all the world;
And the white clouds seemed to immerse
Another ruined universe.



1833, John Ruskin



Our school is attended by about 550 students coming from all over the valley who commute daily to school to attend one of the four sections: Liceo Scientifico (a senior high school specializing in science education), Liceo delle Scienze umane (a senior high school specializing in human sciences), Ragioneria (a school for accountants) and Geometri (a school for building surveyors).

1st mobility to Greece – 15th – 19th November 2011

The first trip of the Comenius Project took place in mid November.



We were six students: Sofia Abruzzese, Anna Del Curto, Giovanni Costalonga, Cesare Della Bella, Paolo Montemurro and Anna De Stefano, attending the Leonardo Da Vinci School, who went from 15th to 19th November to Greece together with our teachers Federica Del Gior-



gio and Mira Rossi.

The meeting, with students and teachers of all the nations which took part in the project, Poland, Finland, Germany, Greece and Portugal, was in Volos, the biggest seaport in Thessaly.

Being hosted by Greek families was a great idea. Being part of a family is not only an opportunity for socialization but also a chance for a better understanding of the local culture.

The Greek hospitality was impressive, too: people were immediately helpful and warm hearted. We were welcomed without any prejudice by both students and parents.

The immersion in the culture was helped also by the direct participation to lessons.

We think that Greek students are more active during the lessons, they relate to the teachers in a more friendly way than we do, maybe because of the number of students per class, which is lower than ours.

The Mousiko Sxoleio Volou is one of the most important music schools in Greece, so attending music lessons was fascinating.

On 17th we went to a celebration in memory of 17th November 1973, when the students of Athens University rose against the military regime. This event is still in people's mind. There were many demonstrations in the streets that night.



The next day we visited the picturesque city of Makrinitza, on Mount Pelion, where we went to a museum of local history. Now that we are back, we all show to be satisfied and enthusiastic of the experience we lived there.





The discovery of Europe thanks to the Comenius Project:

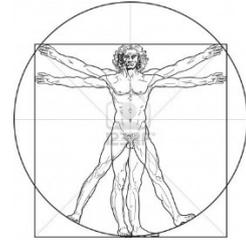
2nd mobility to Lisbon – 28th February – 3rd March 2012

Lisbon: the second mobility involved 8 students and two teachers. Thanks to this project we had the opportunity to come in contact with other teens of the countries involved in the same project and to get to know Portugal and Lisbon. Portugal, Germany, Poland, Finland, Greece and Italy may seem apparently very distant nations because of their different cultures and traditions, but at the same time, they are very similar. During these five days we were hosted by some students of Escola Secundaria Maria Amalia Vaz De Carvalho in Lisbon. In their homes we had the feeling to be integral part of the family, not only guests. Despite a day of bad weather, we had a very good time. This experience enriched us and showed us a new way of seeing diversity: no longer an obstacle, but something that helps people grow. During our stay in the Portuguese capital city we could join the lessons of our partners, and so we had a different approach to the various school subjects. We visited the main attractions of Lisbon and its surroundings, such as the picturesque town of Sintra, Cabo Da Roca and the “Centro Cultural de Belem” and Jeronimos. In addition, we also had a walk among the seven hills on which the city is situated. The third day, we visited the Aquarium in Lisbon (the “Oceanarium”) and strolled the city. We found this was a great experience!



3rd mobility to Italy – April 23rd – 27th 2012

Istituto di Istruzione Superiore “Leonardo Da Vinci”
Chiavenna



Topic

Lesson outlines; booklet with exercises / class tests: past and present

Programme

April 22nd and 23rd

Partners arrive at Chiavenna

Accommodation at host families for students

April 24th

Morning:

Welcome ceremony and visit of the school

Participation in lessons

Afternoon:

Sightseeing walk in Chiavenna



April 25th

Trip to Varenna and Bellagio
(lake Como)

April 26th

Morning:

Presentation of activities

Afternoon:

Walk to the Acqua Fraggia Falls

Visit of the Vertemate palace

Dinner party for students

April 27th and 28th

Departure day



4th mobility to Finland – 2nd – 6th October 2012

The trip to Finland started very soon, in the morning of October the 2nd. Each of us was a little scared and a little nervous but we were all looking forward to leaving. We left from Milan and after a short stopover in Frankfurt, we reached Helsinki in the afternoon, where we joined some of the other groups we were going to Suonenjoki with and we left by bus. Late in the evening we finally arrived and we met our host families. We were warmly welcomed and put at ease with cordiality and kindness.

The following day we were really able to observe the differences of the reality we were in, even though in the end they revealed not so deep as we might have thought. We met in Suonenjoki's school where the Finnish partners had organized some games to kill frost and we did them all together, then we took part in a baking lesson and prepared typical Finnish pies. Thanks to that the next step was easy and relaxed; we displayed our works and described our foreign friends the most common beliefs we have about them in Italy. Obviously stereotypes about the typical Italian weren't missing.

During our stay in Suonenjoki we also took part in some lessons at "Lukio", the local high school, with the students who hosted us and their schoolmates. It was an occasion to compare our school and the Finnish one. First of all teachers have their own classrooms or they share them with other teachers of the same subject. As a consequence, students move from class to class according to their timetable. We noticed how different the students' behaviour was from ours in their relationship with teachers: the atmosphere at school is definitely "friendly" and students are invested with the responsibility to be part of the lesson or not. The kids have the possibility to specialize in the line of study they prefer as they have a wide variety of subjects and courses to choose from. The amount of assigned homework seemed to be smaller compared to what happens in our schools, also because students have a lot of free time to do sports and see friends.

The day spent by one of the numerous Finnish lakes, roasting sausages and marshmallows on the fire, was great fun. It was also an occasion to get to know each other better. And last but not least, we also had the chance to try the renowned Finnish sauna ending with a traditional and inevitable dip in the lake, quite cold at that time.

The most populous cities are a long way away from Suonenjoki, so the last day but one, we got to Kuopio, a city of about 90 thousand inhabitants, by coach. The first stop of the day was Puijo Tower, not far from the city centre. The tower lurks over the city on the Hill of Puijo, offering stunning views over lakes and forests. In Kuopio we also visited the city museum dedicated to archaeology, history and natural history of the region. It hosts the only Finnish reconstruction of a mammoth and a showcase on Neanderthal man. The Finnish students spent the entire afternoon with us, showing us around the best shops in town. In the evening we all gathered together for the closing party, organized by our helpful and kind hosts, who offered us music, candies, cakes and much more.

Unfortunately, the next morning we had to leave after an emotional thanks and already with a bit of melancholy.

They were days, people and unforgettable places that we had to leave unwillingly, with the promise, however, to be back one day.



5th mobility to Germany – December 10th – 4th 2012

In December we went to Germany for the fifth mobility of the Comenius Project.

Accompanied by the two teachers Marco Mazzoni and Marco Del Papa we started our trip on Monday 10th flying to Iserlohn, North Rhine-Westphalia; when we arrived there we found the families that would host us and the other students from Portugal, Finland, Greece and Poland: a real melting pot!

We experienced for 5 days friendship, respect and sharing; this trip gave us the chance to open our mind and to grow as human beings in the world.

We did a lot of activities, for example we went shopping in Dortmund, a small city close to where we were. There we found



a giant Santa Claus and the biggest Christmas tree in Europe!

The German students organized for us a very nice party and a local tourist guide showed us

the most characteristic corners of Iserlohn.

On the fourth day we attended some lessons in the local school trying to catch the differences between several ways of learning and teaching.

Besides Iserlohn, we visited Cologne with its great cathedral, and Bonn, where we increased our knowledge of German history thanks to the interesting museum of the city. We also had the opportunity to taste the delicious flavours of Germany by strolling through the stands of the local Christmas markets that we found in every city we went. The only small inconvenience was the arctic weather that accompanied us every single day but it must be said that thanks to the cold, the lights and the copious hot chocolate, we were able to feel a sweet Christmas atmosphere. The families were very hospitable and kind, they received us in their own houses involving us in their domestic life.

Despite the differences that at the beginning distinguished us, in the end we realized that every boy and every girl experiences the same joys and the same emotions, no matter where they come from.



6th mobility to Chorzów – 10th – 14th APRIL 2013

Here we are at the end of our adventure which started two years ago in Volos. An adventure that brought us, students of the “Leonardo da Vinci” school in Chiavenna, to the Polish city of Chorzow.

We had the opportunity to meet and get to know boys and girls of our age, with different lifestyle, coming from Finland, Greece, Portugal, Germany and Poland of course.

We left on Monday 8th from Bergamo Airport with our teachers Federica Del Giorgio and Gabriela Patrini. We arrived at Krakow Airport from which



we continued to Chorzow in Silesia in southern Poland, not far from Katowice. Here, by the school, our partners and their families were waiting for us.

we continued to Chorzow in Silesia in southern Poland, not far from Katowice. Here, by the school, our partners and their families were waiting for us.

We had the chance to live for 5 days in Polish families that welcomed us with extraordinary affection letting us in their lifestyles which to some extent is very different from ours.

We lived every single day in Chorzow with deep

intensity. We attended some lessons at the Akademic Zespól Szkol Ogołnoksztalcacych where our partners study and visited different places such as the near city of Katowice, that we reached by an old tram exclusively reserved to the Comenians, and Krakow, that is considered by its inhabitants the most beautiful city in Poland.

Not far from Krakow, we had also the occasion to visit the very interesting Wieliczka Salt Mine.

A special staging in English of "The merchant of Venice" performed by the students of the host



school in Theatre Rozrywki, gave us gooseflesh.



In such a short time, in spite of the differences in languages, places and ways of life, we learned to appreciate diversity and to be part of a team made up of different but similar people. What we learnt is that all in all, what counts is what makes us united.

QUESTIONNAIRE ABOUT SCHOOL RULES: STUDENTS AND TEACHERS



STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE:

1. HAVE YOU EVER HEARD ABOUT OUR SCHOOL REGULATIONS?

YES 83%



NO 17%



Uhhmmm...
what's this?

2. DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOU CAN FIND A COPY OF OUR SCHOOL RULES?

YES 77%

NO 23%

IF YES, WHERE?

Hey Paola, where
can I find one?

Ahhh... what a
silly girl!



IN THE CLASSROOM 71%

IN THE HEADMASTER'S OFFICE 29%



3. HAVE YOU EVER READ IT?

YES 17.6%

NO 41.2 %

IN PART 38.1%

MOST OF IT 2.1%

IF YES, WHICH PART DO YOU KNOW?

BEHAVIOUR 7.7%

SANCTIONS 30.7%

RIGHTS AND DUTIES 46.2%

...Maybe I'd
better read
it



4. DO YOU THINK IT'S IMPORTANT TO KNOW THE SCHOOL RULES?

YES 98.3%

WHY?

TO KNOW RIGHTS AND DUTIES 70.6%

TO RESPECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS 29.4%



Speech bubbles: "Respect is fundamental! Do it, PAOLA?" and "Yes, peace and love!!"



NO 1.7%

5. DO YOU THINK THAT TEACHERS SHOULD DISCUSS THEM IN CLASS?

YES 81.3%

NO 18.7 %

IF YES WHY?

BECAUSE THE STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW THE

RULES TO ENJOY SCHOOL LIFE BETTER 96.8%

I HAVE NO IDEA 3.2%

6. WHICH RULES DO YOU THINK SHOULD BE REMOVED?

NONE 72.3%

AFTER THREE BAD NOTES IN THE TEACHER'S DIARY

THE STUDENT IS SUSPENDED 17.4%

THE STRICTNESS ABOUT BEING LATE 10.3%

Speech bubble: "OH OH...This is the third note! I'm going to risk SUSPENSION!!!"



Speech bubble: "Lol 😊"



7. DO YOU RESPECT THE RULES?

ALWAYS 11.8%

GENERALLY 80.3%

NOT OFTEN 5.9%

RARELY 2%

8. DO YOU THINK OUR SCHOOL RULES ARE TOO RESTRICTIVE?

YES 0%

NO 100%



WOW! WHAT GOOD STUDENTS!

WHAT!? IT'S CLEAR THAT I DIDN'T DO THIS QUESTIONNAIRE!



9. WHICH SCHOOL RULES DO YOU CONSIDER NECESSARY?

NO SMOKING 21.9%

NO FIGHTING 19.4%



NOT USING MOBILE PHONE 18.2%

NO SEXUAL HARASSMENT 17.9%



!*+**#+#!!



#+!*##**X!!

NO SWEARING 22.6%

10. WOULD YOU LIKE TO ADD OTHER RULES?

YES 100%

NO 0%

A LONGER BREAK 31.6%

A LATER START 20%

EATING IN CLASS 48.4%

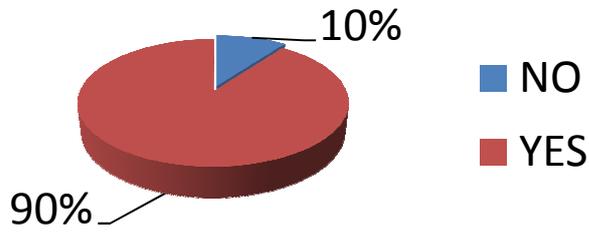


The school of
my dreams!!!

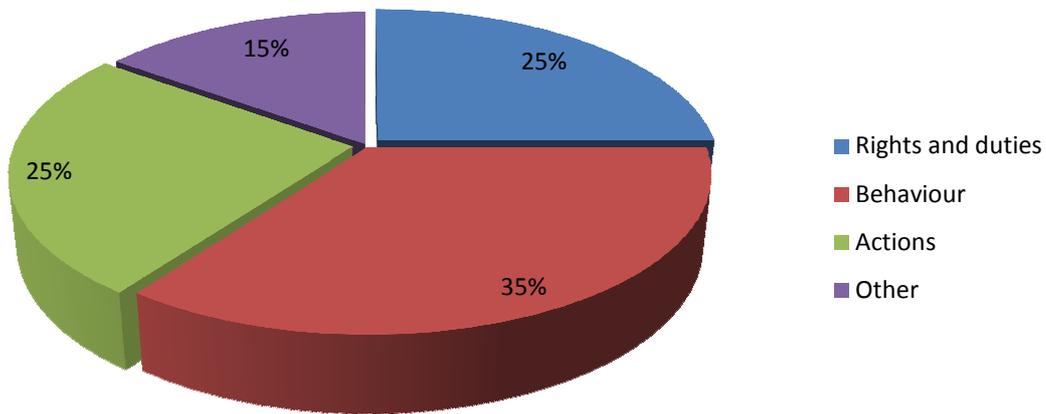


TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE:

1. HAVE YOU EVER READ OUR SCHOOL RULES?



2. WHICH PART DO YOU KNOW?



3. DO YOU THINK IT IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW THE SCHOOL RULES?

YES 100%

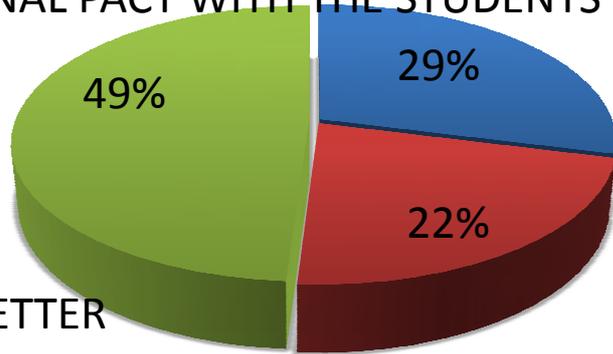
NO 0%

WHY?

■ TO AGREE AN EDUCATIONAL PACT WITH THE STUDENTS

■ IT'S OUR DUTY

■ TO ENJOY SCHOOL LIFE BETTER



4. DO YOU THINK THAT YOUR COLLEAGUES SHOULD DISCUSS THEM IN CLASS?

Yes 100%

NO 0%

WHY?

TO EDUCATE AND EMPOWER THE STUDENTS 100%



IN YOUR CASE
THEY DON'T
-.-'!



WOW, OUR
TEACHERS
TAKE CARE
OF US!

5. DO YOU TALK ABOUT SCHOOL RULES IN YOUR CLASS?

YES 80%

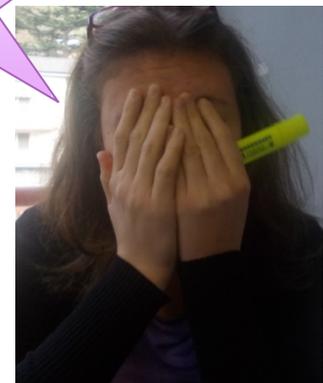
NO 20%

Hi guys, today
there is no maths
test!...Today
let's talk about
our school regula-
tions!

Oh no! I love
maths tests!!!

I'm so happy
that I feel faint!

What a silly
boy! And!
What a
crazy girl!



6. DO YOU THINK OUR SCHOOL RULES ARE DIFFERENT FROM THE ONES YOU HAD TO FOLLOW AS A STUDENT?

YES 60%

NO 40%

IF YES THEY ARE:

MORE RESTRICTIVE 10%

LESS RESTRICTIVE 60%

MORE OR LESS THE SAME 30%



STUDENTS OF THE 70s



TODAY'S STUDENTS

7. WOULD YOU LIKE TO INTRODUCE OTHER RULES?

YES 100%

NO 0%

8. HAVE YOU EVER ADMINISTERED VERY SEVERE SANCTIONS DURING YOUR CLASSES?

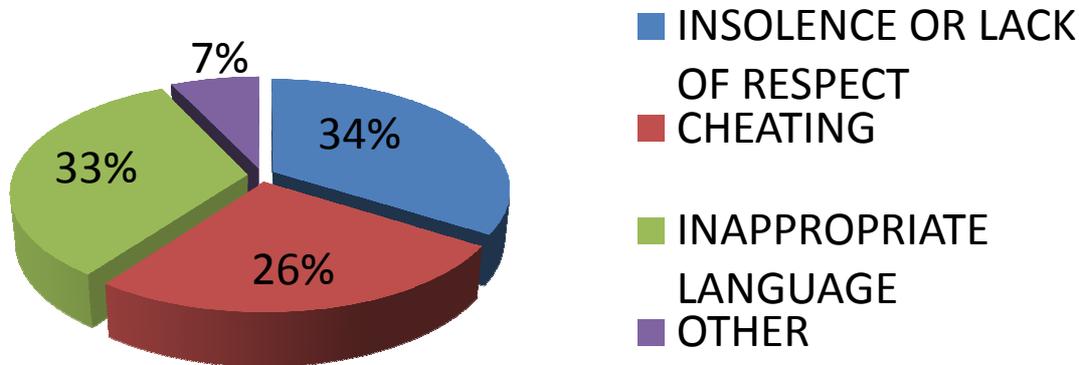
NO 100%

YES 0%



We're all good students!

9. WHICH BEHAVIOUR DO YOU CONSIDER UNACCEPTABLE DURING LESSONS?



STUDENTS' VOICES

The Comenius project was very interesting, because it allowed us to meet new people, new customs and cultures using English as a common language.

It was an opportunity to meet people from Europe and build up a cosmopolitan vision of life. We could make friends and get to know different life styles.



It gave us the chance to realise that Europe is just like a big family

We could travel and visit wonderful places

It was a great experience and an occasion to improve our English skills

The project was a very good opportunity to see the world outside Chiavenna. It helped us open our mind

Comenius is culture, socialization, fun, life

I met new people and now I have a lot of new friends from abroad

It was a great opportunity to discover Europe from a different perspective

Going on the mobilities we had the chance to live our hosts' family life in a kind and friendly atmosphere

Thanks to the trips we had the chance to change our mind about other cultures and break stereotypes

This project was the best opportunity to improve not only our English language skills but also to find out how similar other European teenagers are

We understood how important the English language is as a key of communication

We really enjoyed being hosted by families and appreciated their hospitality. They made us feel at home and involved us in their family life and traditions

The mobilities were great experiences that left us awesome memories

After seeing how our peers live in other countries, after meeting their families and living with them, we feel like one folk

Even though we believed we were completely different from one another we are now aware that we have a lot in common and feel closer

I liked it a lot when I could host a partner student during their stay in Italy. They brought a very positive change to everyday family life

The Finnish Comenius Experience

COMENIUS PROJECT



FINLAND



Suonenjoki - Suonenjoen
lukio





Suonenjoen lukio is an upper secondary school providing its students with a high-quality, inspiring learning environment. At the moment the school has 13 teachers and approximately 100 students.

The wide range of courses available to our students makes it possible for them to pursue their personal interests such as foreign languages, mathematics, humanities or even arts and crafts.

"Growing up for life" is the leading guideline of our school. Consequently, the school encourages its students to find and cultivate their personal strengths and is committed to giving them all the necessary knowledge and skills for lifelong learning and self-development.

During the last few years Suonenjoen lukio has been increasingly active in forming new international relations in order to give its students a wider knowledge of foreign languages and cultures.

In the beginning of autumn 2010 Suonenjoki Upper Secondary School's teachers decided to add our school's international connections with a Comenius project, which our students could participate. In October 2010 A German teacher send us an eTwinning message and asked us to join their project. Thank you Wolfgang for contacting us.

Students' opinions

1st mobility to Volos, Greece

The Greek culture differs from that of Finland quite much. The first thing we noticed was that the Greek are more talkative and extrovert than Finnish people. We also discovered that when talking, the Greek came closer and used body language a lot. For example, complete strangers came to touch our hair on the streets and people greeted us by kissing our cheeks. It was extremely bizarre and awkward because we don't do that in Finland. Despite our huge cultural differences we found Greeks funny, warmhearted and very lovable people.

Differences between Finland and Greece

There were also many differences between our schools. The main difference between our schools was that Music school of Volos was much bigger, and there were a lot more students than we have here in Suonenjoen Lukio. Despite the large amount of students, they all seemed to know each other –and even us, which was very nice to notice.

Everything was louder in the Greek school: people shouted a lot and the bell buzzed vociferously. Even at lessons the students were shouting and the teachers didn't lift a finger to silence them; they just shouted louder. We got the picture that the students don't really have time to study in lessons because they were just talking, so they were given lots of homework. On the other hand, every lesson was very refreshing, and getting bored seemed to be impossible. Also the lessons in Greece only lasted 45 minutes whereas our lessons in Finland last 75 minutes.

The cafeteria and the bathrooms were different from the ones that we are used to in Finland. The furniture in the cafeteria seemed plain, the chairs looked like garden chairs and the tables were really high. The food was also served in weird



cardboard containers instead of real plates. However the cafeteria was a great place to have a birthday-party; our wonderful hosts bought a birthday cake to one of us, and they brought it candles lightened in the dark cafeteria singing "Happy birthday" in Greece. In the bathrooms there weren't any actual toilet seats, just holes in the floor, which shocked us quite much.

Many customs at the school were different. For example, the students weren't allowed to use their mobile phones at school. The teachers were called by their last name. There was a morning assembly that included a prayer every morning, which was weird at first, but later we found it great. The students carried their stuff with them instead of leaving their jackets or bags in the hallways. We found it funny that the teachers and students' parents were smoking in front of the school building, because smoking in the school area is forbidden in Finland.

Research work for 1st mobility

It was quite challenging for us to start researching our school's normal school day in the past and the present, because this project was the our school's first Comenius project, so it the begin-

ning we had no ideas what was expected from us. But subject was familiar for us all, so researching and preparing our presentation for Volos became easier.

Research results for Volos

Typical school day in Suonenjoki upper secondary school

We have school on 5 days a week. A school day can last from 1 lesson to 5 lessons and a lesson lasts 75 minutes. We have about 6 different subjects per period and 5 periods a year. After every period we have a test week.

In Finland teachers are called by their first name. The school doesn't provide books, so the students have to buy their books themselves.

We have 10 to 15 minutes long breaks in between lessons. The students play billiards or table football or just hang out with their friends.

Sometimes students can have free time without lessons in the middle of the day. It means that some students have school and others don't de-

pending of their timetable. In their free time, students may go home until their next lesson starts, or stay at school doing the same things as in breaks.

At 10:40 we have our lunch break, which lasts 40 minutes. We have a cafeteria of our own, where we eat free yummy food every day.

Our school utilizes technology in teaching, for example we have a computer class, information television that shows current school things for students, document cameras, a smartboard and we also have super expensive calculators in math lessons.

Typical school day in Suonenjoki upper secondary school in the past

There was also school on 5 days per week, but lessons only lasted 45 minutes. There were periods but no specific test weeks, so tests were held at any time of the period.

The breaks lasted 15 minutes. The students did quite similar things on their breaks as we do now.

Lunch break was 30 minutes long and it was free in the past too.

There weren't almost any computers and no Internet access, so all the information came from books.

Typical student in Suonenjoki upper secondary school

Students in our school listen all kinds of music. On breaks students listen to the radio or music from their phones. There is also a piano in the corridor. The most common music styles are Finnish rap, reggae, pop, rock, heavy metal and American hits.

There are many different clothing styles in our school. Most of students wear jeans, hoodies and t-shirts. Regardless of style, almost all students wear wool socks. Most girl students have long blond hair, and boys' hairstyle is short and dark.

Every student in our school has a mobile phone and they use it a lot. They are either listening to music, text messaging, using Facebook, or playing Angry Birds. Some students have also portable game consoles such as PSP, Game Boy and Nintendo DS.

Every year we have 1-3 exchange students from all over the world. We also have a twin school in

Alvesta, Sweden, and every year 20 students go there to learn about Swedish culture.

On breaks students can eat their own snacks. Usually students eat candies, chocolate and chips. Almost everybody drinks energy drinks or lemonades.

Typical student in Suonenjoki upper secondary school in the past

25 years ago the most popular music style was disco music. The most common clothes were skinny jeans and big shirts. Hairstyle was curly and fluffy, for both boys and girls. Only few stu-

dents had a mobile phone, or a “walkman”. There were some exchange students 25 years ago too. Snacks were also the same.

The courses and culture of Suonenjoki upper secondary school

We have many cultural courses in our school; for example a choir and an articulatory. As it was already mentioned, our school has a twin school in Sweden (Alvesta). By joining this project, students are able to complete studies that equal the number of lessons of one course. In this year is possible to join in Comenius –project which also represents lessons equal to one course. On second year you can become a tutor who helps students who are on their first year in upper secondary school. It’s also possible to join the student council.

At the beginning of upper secondary school the tutors organize “nasujaiset”, a welcoming party, for the first year students.

Independence celebration is a traditional feast in Finnish schools. It is the time when some students of the third year get graduate and their certificates for having passed the matriculation examination. It’s a tradition that during the festivities, old students of the school give speeches.

In November, the third year students go to Helsinki to Studia –fair. There are people from different universities presenting their schools and telling the students why their university would be the best choice.

The Christmas feast of our school begins late at night and ends a little bit after midnight. First the students drink (non-alcoholic) mulled wine and eat gingerbread cookies. The students of the first year make a show in the Christmas feast. Usually the choir sings some Christmas songs, but the students can also perform a play or form a band and play songs. After the show all the students and teachers go to the church and when it’s past midnight, everyone can go home.

In February it’s time for “penkkarit”, a feast to celebrate the last day in school, where the third year students get dressed in funny costumes (for example Spiderman or Donald Duck). They throw candies from a lorry to the pupils from elementary schools and junior high school. The students also show off their dance moves, which is usually pretty funny too.

On the next day is “vanhojen tanssit”, a sort of prom, when the second year students dance some very cool dances (for example tango, waltz and salty dog rag). The girls of the second year have beautiful dresses and hairdos, the boys of the second year have fancy tuxedos. In the past “vanhojen tanssit” was a lot smaller feast than nowadays.

Our opinion of the program

Schools program was very nice. We liked the trip to Makrynitsa, where we could admire the beautiful nature of Greece. It was also amazing to see all the talented students perform magnificent music shows including dances and beautiful songs.

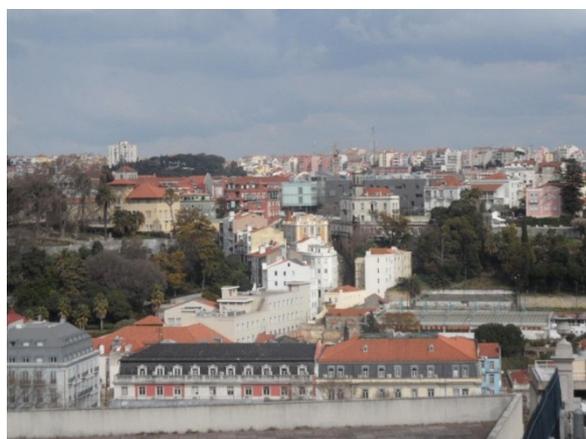
Host family life

Living with our host families was a pleasant experience. Everyone was very nice and hospitable, even when we didn't always understand each other. It was interesting to find out how people actually live in other countries, like when they could just pick oranges from their windows. It was also great fun to meet our host student's families and close relatives –we met many grandmothers, uncles and aunts, who were either living with our hosts or just came to meet us. This differs much from Finnish culture, where family is

The students of the third year go to ABI cruise, a cruise for graduating students, on February. The cruise lasts one night.

In the spring feast, most of the students of the third year graduate.

The tutors and the student council arrange many awesome parties to the students throughout the year.



of course important, but all relatives are not that close.

By living with these families, we got to see how their ordinary life is like and learned much more than if we had stayed in a hotel. We wouldn't change the experience we got through this program to anything in the world, and if we could, we would fly back to Volos immediately.

2nd mobility to Lisbon, Portugal

First thing we noticed, when we landed to Lisbon, were the lights. It was about midnight, so it was dark and there were lights everywhere. The four days we spent in Portugal were amazing and full of action.

It has been a long time since our trip and it's starting to get difficult to remember things as they were, maybe because of the lack of sleep on the trip. Although we didn't really have much time to sleep, compared to our normal routines at home, everything else was well planned. We got to see that the Portuguese are very open and outgoing people and our host families were very kind and welcoming. Speaking English in front of so many people was kind of embarrassing and we were really nervous, but it went well enough. It was actually really fun to know what other countries' school rules are like, and even more interesting was to compare them with each other. Comenius helped us to come over our nervousness about speaking other than our native language with other people and we learned that even though you don't speak perfect English, you will be understood. Other than that, people were so kind to each other in Portugal, and when we



hang out on our free time, it was really nice.

At the school in Portugal we took part in some lessons, for example philosophy and mathematics. During the days we also visited some beautiful places, for example Capo da Roca, the most western part of continental Europe. There was a breathtaking view to the sea, the Sun was shining and a warm wind was blowing.



We also spotted other differences between Portugal and Finland, for example that in Portugal we had dinner in the evening, maybe four hours later than we usually have dinner at home in Finland. And the shopping malls are open till midnight which was really weird for us! Our hosts' school was really big and there were many students, compared to our small school in Suonenjoki.

We had a lot of night time activities while being there. At home we usually go to bed the time they go out. We were out having pizza with the students from other countries or dancing at some nightclub which was weird for us because you can't go to club in Finland if you're under 18. It was fun to get to know the Portuguese culture in such a short time. The weather was amazing in Portugal and we Finns could walk around in t-shirts because compared to the cold weather in Finland at the time, Portugal was like a sauna to us. After the trip we all were very tired but happy.

3rd Mobility to Chiavenna, Italy

A year ago we visited a small Northern Italian town Chiavenna. First we flew to Bergamo. That was the first flight for one of our group member, Milja. She was extremely excited about the flight. We spent the first night in a hotel in Milan. We couldn't just stay in our rooms so we left exploring the streets of beautiful Milan in the same night.

Next day we visited cathedral Duomo and did a little shopping. Our train to Chiavenna finally left around five o'clock in the afternoon. The trip from Milan to Chiavenna seemed to take a lifetime. We were so nervous and excited at the same time. We were having a hard time to keep calm and sit tight in our seats. If my memory serves me right we- Essi and Milja – were literally screaming on the train, because we were so nervous that staying quiet seemed impossible.

After many drops of sweat and screams of nervousness we finally arrived in Chiavenna. Our hosts were there at the station to welcome us. They gave us kisses on our cheeks and introduced themselves. At this point the excitement and the nervousness disappeared for a little while. After our arrival we went to see the others on the Comenius. They were gathered into a local bar and they seemed to have a really good time. They all were happy to see us and we were also happy to see them. Soon it was time to go home.

In the morning I had an Italian breakfast. It included some biscuits, cereals and some tea. The breakfast was way different to ours in Finland! When we had eaten we walked to the railway station and hopped on a train to school. It was weird to go to school by train. The trip took approximately 5 to 10 minutes. At school we were able to take part in lessons and observe. The pupils could ask us some questions. To my mind, the greatest question was about our blonde hair. Many girls wanted to know whether the blonde colour was natural. IT IS! Italians are much more social and friendly than Finns! After school day we went home to eat pasta. It was heavenly good! My host mom had made it, so now I can

say I've eaten original Italian spaghetti! Straight from the dinner table we rushed to town and met



the others at a local pub. It felt unreal to finally meet the people I had been talking to via Facebook!

During the next day we hiked to a beautiful hill called 'Paraiso' or something like that. It sure seemed like a paradise. The Alps were out of this world and the flowers, trees and houses on the hills were absolutely amazing! The landscape made me speechless. We don't have anything like that in Finland. I remember asking Paolo if he thought the place was beautiful but he didn't think it was anything special. I didn't agree with him.

As we returned we got to walk around the town and do a little shopping if we wanted. Soon we had to go home to get ready for going out to a local nightclub where the youth usually spends their weekends dancing and having fun. I had so much fun at club. We danced like maniacs. I guess I have never danced that much. I could say it was one of the best nights of my life. Again: Italians are much more amazing than us boring Finns! When it was time to go home I was exhausted from the dancing and having the best time.

Next morning we took a train to a town nearby. I cannot remember the name of the town. In the town we took a boat to some national park/ garden. The place was amazingly beautiful. Quickly we became a little bored waiting for the others and we started to take funny photos of ourselves.

We laughed so much that our abs were killing us. Our teacher Ville laughed at us.

Back in Chiavenna we were so tired that we went straight home and I fell asleep as soon as my head touched the pillow.

Next morning we had our presentations performed. The Polish did the best job! After presentations some of the students were interviewed for a magazine. We were supposed to tell about our hometown and what we thought about Italy and the Comenius.



While Filippos was singing and playing guitar everyone got their own Comenius T-shirt. We had a little freetime so we played music and had a great time together. I was a little sad because it was the last day in Chiavenna and we were going to leave this all behind the next day.

In the afternoon we visited an old mill and an old mansion. The mansion was very interesting due to my interests towards history. After the mansion we had one more destination; the waterfalls! I felt like Lara Croft as I hopped from rock to rock crossing the river. The falls were absolutely amazing. We took like millions of photos next to it.

After the long way home we got ourselves ready for the farewell party. I was sad and extremely glad at the same time. The party was super! We danced, ate, listened to great music and enjoyed the company. It was heartbreaking when it was time to say goodbye and go home. I shed a few tears...

The final morning. I think I have never been so sad before. It felt like I have spent a hundred years in my host family and in Italy. Our hosts walked with us to the railway station where we left for Bergamo by Taxi. The trip back home felt like a thousand years. I really didn't want to leave and the others felt the same way. It is amazing how close one can get in just a few days.

4th Mobility to Suonenjoki, Finland

Our school hosted a Comenius mobility in the beginning of October 2012. As hosts we wanted to make sure that our guests could enjoy and experience many of the most interesting features of Finnish culture. Comenius students enjoyed Finnish sauna, campfire with sausages and Finnish pulla and of course home economics class with some traditional Finnish delicacies.



4th mobility's program

Wednesday October 3rd

9.00 Getting to know each other (ice-breaking games)

10.20 – 10.35 School lunch

10.35 – 12.30 Cooking lesson: Some traditional Finnish pastries / teachers' meeting

12.45 – around 15/15.30 Comenius presentations

Evening: 18.00 Welcome dinner for teachers at Vanhamäki

Thursday October 4th



Morning: Observing lessons/for teachers Comenius meeting and visit to Lintharju Secondary School 11.20-11.50 School lunch

12.00-18.00 Saunaniemi: Finnish games, sauna, campfire and little snack, Finnish for foreigners, feedback on Comenius presentations.

Evening: Teachers' dinner at restaurant Morton in Rautalampi

Friday October 5th

9.00 Departure for Kuopio around 10.00 Kuopio museum

11.15-12.00 Puijo tower

12.30 Lunch (students in town with hosts and teachers at restaurant Lounassalonki)

13 – 16 Shopping /Free time

16 – 17 Glowbowling for students (free of charge, complimentary by Suonenjoki students) around 18 Back in Suonenjoki

Evening

Students: Farewell party organized by Finnish host students.

Teachers: 19.00 dinner at Kutvosen kurvi

Saturday October 6th early in the morning:
Going home

5th Mobility in Iserlohn, Germany



The trip to Germany was an amazing experience to us all. Not only did we make new friends from

different countries, but we got to learn about the country itself in an effective and interesting way. We learned how our countries differ from each other and what things our countries have in common.

The Germans resemble Finnish people a lot, so we didn't experience a huge cultural shock when we were interacting with them. Getting to know the Germans and talking with them was because they are really nice, friendly and kind. It was also

great to meet some familiar faces from the previous trips again.

We were a bit shocked by the size of the German school. It was so much bigger than our school and there were a huge amount of students. With a great amount of people comes a great amount of noise, which we got used to quite quickly. The size wasn't the only difference between our schools. The German school wasn't as modern as our school. On the other hand, the cafeteria in the German school was much cozier than the cafeteria in our school. The school lunch in Finland is free whereas in Germany you had to pay for it. Many German students told us that they usually bring their own lunch from home and some said that they had never eaten the food of the cafeteria, which we found interesting.

Our topic for this mobility was our school's exchange programs today and in the past. It wasn't an easy topic for us Finns, our school hasn't had so many contacts abroad, mainly some individual students, but it was interesting to hear about other schools' experiences.

We really liked the program of the week. The trips to Bonn, Cologne and Dortmund gave us a chance to see the beautiful nature, admire the architecture and simply get to know Germany better. All the Christmas markets were lovely, and the highlight of the little trips was of course Cologne Cathedral. It was amazing to see this incredible piece of history and to learn more about it. Almost all the activities, like visiting the museum in Bonn, were connected to history in some way, and we picked up all kinds of information about Iserlohn, the cities near it and overall Germany.

The program was also great because it included activities in which we students got to know each other better and learn more about our differ-

ences and similarities. The only negative thing was that the German students had exams all week, so they couldn't participate in some of the activities. We thought that it was a bit unfair to the German students and we kind of lost time that we could have spent getting to know them better.



Like in all the other countries, living with host families gave us a deeper and better view of everyday life in a foreign country. The families were hospitable and showed interest in our life as well by asking things about our country and our homes. Everyone was incredibly nice and made us feel welcomed. Even though the German students had to study for their exams, they still organized fun things to do on our free time in the evenings, which was really nice. Especially visiting the Christmas market of the town was fun.

Of course, a trip to Germany would be nothing without food. German chocolate was a hundred times better than we ever imagined and each one of us enjoyed the mulled wine that was sold almost everywhere. All the Christmas markets offered delicious and tasty food.

All in all, we learned a lot about Germany and its culture, history and people. We got to meet amazing new people and we had the time of our lives.

6th mobility to Chorzów, Poland

Polish people:

We liked Polish people a lot. They were really kind to us even though we were strangers. They also liked talking with us. They are extrovert and happy. They have long and dark hair. Elderly Polish people don't seem to speak so much English. But they were still very nice and came to talk with us.

They use the same kind of clothes as we do.



Polish school:

The Polish school building looked nice from the outside, and even better on the inside. Polish school system seems practical and sensible. It is different from what we are used to but we think it is almost as good as here. The Polish school is very big, there are a lot of people. That's different. They have a great cafeteria! It is very cozy and the food is cheap (and it should be as they don't have free school lunches!). There should have been more bathrooms. Also they have short lessons (45min) as we have much longer ones (75min). In the school building there are very few places to sit.

Future of our Schools:

Our topic for this mobility was to try to figure out what our school's future might look like in 30 years time. We interviewed 52 people (fellow students and some teachers) and asked them

how Finnish upper secondary school will change in 30 years time.

Finnish presentation in Poland

In our presentation we first told some basic facts on Finnish school system. Finnish school is free of charge. School lunch is free. The basic education is divided in to two obligatory periods. Primary school or "lower-school" is for 7-13 year-old children. Secondary school is for 14-16 year-olds. Then there is an option to go to study in high school or follow courses in vocational training, which are both funded by the government. We also told that there are no school uniforms in any of the Finnish schools. Every native Finnish speaker has to study Swedish as it is the second native language of Finland.

Future

We interviewed 52 Suonenjoen Lukio students about their opinions of future schools in Finland using questionnaire. People thought that in the future teaching methods will be very close to those we have now. There will be less exams, or no exams at all. Individual's skills will be shown in continuous assessment. Lessons can be attended via webcam, and students will do more individual studying.

The biggest changes will be:

- more group work and discussion
- independent study increases
- the emphasis on distance learning
- no exams only skills tests and continuous assessment
- the teacher gives exercises for students who complete them independently
- Schools will be more student-centered
- the use of technology increases

- no mandatory courses , students can choose subjects more freely
- teachers not necessary
- teachers replaced by robots

Teacher's role in the future

- Greatly reduced: more as instructor / motivator
- teachers pay more attention to students' specific skills
- teachers focus more on supervising
- teaching via computer

Week program:



Polish school culture:

You can see it very clearly: in Poland teachers are really respected. Students respect the rules that teachers give to them. They have school uniforms and that is very strange. Even schools look very different in Finland and Poland. In Finnish schools we are given much more space to do what we want.

The week program in Poland was quite busy. There were lots of things to do, maybe a little too much at times. It wasn't perhaps the best idea to walk around the city when every student was starving, but it was still a nice experience. We visited some very awesome places, like a salt mine and a castle in Krakow. It was great to walk around big cities and see very different places that we will remember for the rest of our lives.

Life in a host family:

Life in a host family was a really fun experience! Host families were nice to us and we did enjoy our time with our host parents. The host families didn't leave us starving! They made us eat lots of traditional dishes and gave us food packages to

take with us to school. Every host family was obviously unique but they were all great. Families are smaller than in Finland, and most of the families live in the block of flats.

The German Comenius Experience

COMENIUS PROJECT



GERMANY



Iserlohn - Gymnasium An der
Stenner





Although Gymnasium An der Stenner is located in the centre of our city, it has a suburban character. Iserlohn is a cosy town with a population of approx. 100,000. It is situated between the mountainous "Sauerland" holiday region in the east and the culturally rich Ruhr Region and Rhine Valley in the west, with cities such as Dortmund, Cologne or Dusseldorf.

The number of immigrants from South and East European countries at our school has been increasing over the last few years. Only a few of our about 1,000 students have special needs.

Students are generally motivated to learn and achieve the A-Level diploma ("Abitur", which entitles them to go to university); however, there is a growing number of students who need individual support to meet specific standards of the curriculum. Outside lessons, students of all ages have the opportunity to become active in contributing to our school life and to take on responsibility for others. Over the last few years we have developed a culture of "students helping students", where older stu-

dents offer support to younger pupils, e.g. as learning partners, as technical assistants at musical or literary performances in our school auditorium or as first aid assistants. We also offer a lot of extracurricular activities in which they can develop language skills (e.g. in Italian courses, preparation for international tests in Spanish (DELE) and French (DELFF) on the B2 level of the CEF), the CAE (C1 level of the CEF), or learn musical instruments.

Apart from our Comenius partners, our school has quite a number of international contacts to schools in Poland, Hungary, France, the Netherlands, Ireland and the U.S.A., which include exchange visits in most of the countries involved.

Gymnasium An der Stenner received the label "Europaschule" (European School, cp. the school logo), a label of excellence for schools that prepare stu-

dents for the life in a unified Europe, promote language learning, support the involvement in European affairs and develop European competences.



**EUROPASCHULE
GYMNASIUM
AN DER STENNER**

The Beginning -The Preparatory Meeting of Teachers

From 18th to 21st January 2011 teachers from four European schools met in Iserlohn to prepare the new Comenius project "The development of our schools – School identities in the context of the European integration". Mrs. Melo from Lisbon (Portugal), Mrs. Liikanen from Suonenjoki (Finland), Mrs. Mucharska from Chorzów (Poland) and the German teachers Alkewitz, Jordan, Strano, Krenczer, Windisch and Mr Klusmann, headmaster of "Gymnasium An der Stenner", worked out a project application for the National Agencies of our countries. In a videoconference with Mrs. Federica Del Giorgio from Chiavenna (Italy) we further discussed the finer details of the programme. After the prep meeting we were fortunate and were able to welcome the music

school in Volos (Greece) to our international project group, too.

Working days were highly intensive, constructive and long, as every teacher wanted to achieve the success of the project from the very beginning – a good start for a good project!



The Start: Our first Comenius Meeting

On Friday, 17th September 2011, students and teachers met for the first time during the 2-year Comenius project. Teachers gave Stenner Come-



nius students an overview of the project, the organization and the specific topics. During the first project year students will be working for Comenius in extracurricular activities, in the 2nd year they'll be able to attend a Comenius "project course" as part of their normal lesson plan.

The project starts with aspects of the topic "School life in past and present", which will then be presented in Volos, Greece:

- the typical day of a Stenner student in the past, i.e. 25 years ago and at present

- musical concerts and theatre productions in past and present.
- regular celebrations at our school in past and present.

Comenius students of the 1st year:

Kristina Arndts, Sarah Baasner, Paulina Battista, Blunk Annika, Kimberley Böhme, Laura Bohn, Vanessa Brintrup, Mert Erduman, Lea Gehrke, Justin Jenderny, Laura Kauf, Annika Koch, Louisa Lange de, Melanie Litke, Florian Meister, Denise Pühl, Lena Pühl, Laura Reitmajer, Kerstin Schein, Nina Schnabel, Josephine Seehawer, Katharina Schönwälder, Marina Wrede,

Comenius teachers:

Mr. Alkewitz, Mr. Berkemeier, Dr. Flottmann, Mr. Gropengießer, Mrs. Jordan, Mr. Klusmann, Mrs. Krenczer and Mrs. Windisch.

"When I went to the Comenius meeting for the first time I was very excited. My class teacher knew about my interest in languages and other cultures and told me that the project would be fun for me. I decided to participate. When I

looked at the group and realised that some of my friends were there, too, I was surprised and happy at the same time. The project was well-planned and offered us many opportunities. I was glad to be part of Comenius and was looking forward to a great time." (Paulina Battista)

"At the beginning of the project I was very excited about what to expect. I was afraid of travelling to other countries, because I'd never taken part

in any exchange project. I saw this project as a chance for me to visit other countries and having fun with my friends. I was interested in other cultures and hoped to get new friends. At first I was too insecure to hold presentations in English, but that subsided after some time. Finally, I can say that all fears settled and I had a lot of fun." (Vanessa Brintrup)

Friendship and Hospitality – The Comenius Meeting in Greece

From 15th to 19th November, we, seven students of Gymnasium An der Stenner set off on our journey towards Greece together with two of our Comenius teachers, Dr. Flottmann and Mr. Berkemeier.



Before our arrival, we were all very excited and curious. After all, we were just about to meet our exchange students and their families for the first time.

But everything turned out just fine that evening. Everybody was being picked up and found a comfortable bed to sleep in at the end of a very exhausting day.

On the following morning of 16th November, it was "early up and off to school!" for us. The Greek "Volos High School of Music" is much smaller than our Stenner Gymnasium. One may not believe it, but they were still louder. Just about 400 students outdid us clearly in terms of their daily noise level. In spite of, or maybe rather because of, the great differences in subjects, it was really interesting to see how in another

countries they structure their lessons and teach their subject matters.

During the breaks, we also met the other nationalities for the first time. We made friends with half of Europe. With other students from Finland, Italy, Poland and Greece of course. Just the Portuguese kept us waiting for another day since they had to spend their first night in Madrid due to troubles with their plane.

In the evening, we came back to school. The Greek had arranged a wonderful celebration for us with their great talent for music. The school choir sang songs, the school orchestra had also prepared innumerable pieces of all kinds of known composers. Besides, a group of teachers had prepared a few traditional Greek songs and performed those as well.



One of the many highlights of the evening was the Sirtaki. First only a few Greeks in traditional costumes were on stage to introduce the dance. But who doesn't know Sirtaki? Everybody knew it! And so at the end of the day, five different nations danced together on stage, everybody

laughed and had a lot of fun. That, however, was not even the highlight for me that evening. To me, the greatest moment of the evening was the performance of John Lennon's incredibly beautiful song "Imagine" by the orchestra and the really big school choir together with a solo singer. Then single students from the different countries came to the front and recited some of the verses in their languages and that was the perfect goosebump moment. That evening could just turn out great and so we all went downtown together after the concert.

The following day, 17th November, there was another big celebration in the morning. There was no school due to a holiday, everyone was extremely happy and celebrating loudly. After the speeches in the assembly hall of the school, all the Comenius pupils stayed and waited for the hall to calm down so we could start giving our thoroughly prepared presentations. We all had the same topics, which we were supposed to prepare from the perspective of our country. Thereby we wanted to achieve a better understanding for the differences and similarities of our countries, traditions and school systems. In principle, this went quite well but took far more time than expected. So we were sitting there almost three and a half hours to look at numerous PowerPoint presentations. Even though everyone was quite tired afterwards, it had been very interesting.



On Thursday morning, we all took a trip together up on the close-by mountain. Volos is located directly by the sea. So we had a fabulous view of the mountains, the sea and the beach from there. We spent about three hours up there including a

visit to a museum. After that our teachers apparently wanted to make sure that we at least once get typical Greek food. Our next stop was at the foot of the mountain, where the tables were already nicely set for us. Then we got really everything you can imagine when thinking of Greece: Tzatziki, enormous amounts of meat (e.g. Souvlaki), salty Crêpes, potatoes in oil and so on. The food was excellent! That was the perfect refreshment for the following dances between the tables, which were incited by our friends with their Mediterranean temperament.

At the end of the day, we had to say good-bye to Finland. We German girls used this opportunity to take a picture of the two purely female students groups of Finland and Germany, not least because of the funny hair colours of the Finns.

All in all, it was a wonderful time in Volos. It was a great experience, we learned a lot and it was a lot of fun. Thanks a lot not only to our teachers but also to our host families for their care and acceptance. For me, this trip to Greece was one of the best trips I had ever taken part in and I would always go again!

I think the topic „school today / 25 years ago“ in Greece was really interesting, because it was funny to see how school system and lessons have changed over the years.

Paulina Battista

"My host family was really kind to me. They even gave me a room for my own and the possibility to call my parents every evening. Even though we did not spend much time with my exchange student's parents, I really enjoyed it. - Greece is a really beautiful country. My host family's house was very close to the sea and in the evening one has a gorgeous view on the city." (Sarah Baasner)

"My host family was absolutely great! They treated me like a family member and made everything possible, which was important for me. We laughed together and had a wonderful time. They went on living their life as usual, but they also tried to be open-minded and interested in learning about my own German culture." (Paulina Battista)

Saturday, 03rd December 2011 – Stenner Open Day

Every year we present our school to the general public. Our visitors are mainly parents of Stenner students, parents and their younger children who want to inform themselves if Stenner Gymnasium is the suitable school for them after primary school. In quite a number of locations classes, projects and school groups of any kind presented themselves to them.



We Comenians presented our Comenius project in the context of the diverse exchanges and programmes of our "European School". Some general information and a slide show with photos from our first visit in Greece was in the foreground.

After studying our billboards, students, young and old, could take part in a little prize competition.

Test About Europe

Answer the following questions. For 5 correct answers you'll get a prize.

1. When did Stenner Gymnasium get the "Europaschule" excellence label (European School)?
2. How many partner countries are involved in the Comenius project?
3. How long does the Comenius project last?
4. How many stars are there on the European flag?
5. Who composed the European anthem, the "Ode to Joy"?

Good luck! 😊

Friendliness and Wonderful Views: The Comenius Meeting in Italy

During our Comenius-project five students and two teachers travelled to Chiavenna, a charming little city in Italy, right next to the border of Switzerland. They went there from April 23rd to 27th to meet other Comenians from the international project group and, of course, Italy, who were to be the students' hosts. They turned out to be very accommodating and friendly and gave their best to make the foreigners feel welcome in their lovely city. They even printed special T-shirts for all the Comenians (the teachers got beautiful wine mugs).

At home we, as well as the others, had diligently worked so we could present our findings on different topics:

- a) the process of the European integration in school lessons,
- b) school certificates (e.g. language certificates like CAE, DELF, DELE),
- c) lessons then and now.



All Comenians presented their work on one day in the assembly hall of Leonardo da Vinci School. We were able to see differences in the ways of teaching. For example the teachers in Italy appeared to be much less strict than the Germans are, their lessons are, in a way, less structured and more free. But other nations, Poland for example, have much more similarities in terms of teaching and learning. Despite all differences we

discovered a lot we all have in common: students' reactions to homework or, much better, school trips are always the same, no matter where you live! After the presentations an impromptu party took place. Everybody sang songs together, including some of the teachers...

After the presentations we went to observe lessons, where the Italian students asked us a lot of questions (in English, of course) about our life in Germany; afterwards we went to the cafeteria for lunch, which was excellent.

Our hosts outdid themselves to show their city to its best advantage – not that this was difficult: we went to see beautiful gardens, already in full bloom, a majestic waterfall and the lovely little streets and houses that make up an Italian city. Do we need to mention we also had delicious ice-cream?



A special treat was the trip to the Lago di Como, one of the many stunning places of the area. There we went to see Bellagio with its gardens and terrific countryside. We enjoyed this trip very much!

In the evenings we spent our time in different ways. Many of the hosting families do not live in

the city centre of Chiavenna but in the little villages outside. So some of us met up there or spent time with their hosts. Communication was smooth, but some had to speak „with hands and feet“. But, as mentioned above, everybody went out of their way to make us feel welcome. Some of the students met in the different bars and cafés of Chiavenna to make friends and talk. The visit ended with a great party. Unfortunately we had to say good-bye the very next day, but we knew we would see each other again very soon (the next trip was to be in September to Finland). On the day we went home we had the opportunity to spend a few hours visiting Milano, which is a beautiful and busy city. There we visited famous sights like the cathedral and we did, of course, some shopping.

All in all this trip to Italy was a very rewarding experience, because young people of such different countries got the opportunity to come together, communicate and have fun.

"It was very interesting to see how the other countries had made their presentations. The historical topics were not that interesting, and I think the presentations were sometimes a bit too long." (Vanessa Brintrup)

"I'd say that the topics of the project were good, but a little bit unbalanced. It was interesting to learn things about the past and see ideas for the future. My host family was very nice and helpful, but it was not easy for me to understand their English, this was a bit of a problem. - The view of this village was awesome. It was crazy, how much Italians can eat ;-) I was surprised that there were so many Catholics in Chiavenna." (Justin Jenderny)

Hugs and Tears - The Comenius Meeting in Portugal

In February 2012, a group of students and teachers from our school traveled to the Escola Secundaria Maria Amália Vaz de Carvalho in the heart of Portugal's capital Lisbon.

During the meeting, the students were to share their results on the following subtopics:

- extracurricular activities at the schools
- special days during the academic year of the schools
- school rules and sanctions at the schools

This inter-European collaboration provided the students with insights into the different educational systems of the project countries. They found out that one of the common characteristics of the schools are the extracurricular activities they offer. All across Europe such activities are very popular with students: Whereas the geography club of the Polish school travels India, the Portuguese goalball (a kind of basketball for the blind) club enables blind students to do sports with non-handicapped students. In Italy, students discover the world of literature on roundtrips onboard of "poetry boats" on Lake Como and cultivate domestic plants such as courgettes, peppers or basil for the school's refectory.



However, the students also discovered differences between their schools. The school rules of the Finnish school, for example, proved to be rather strict. Unlike in the other countries, Finnish students caught smoking on the school grounds, are handed over to the police and sanctioned by the law. Interestingly, national holidays, celebrating national or regional heroes, also play an important part in school life, especially in the southern European countries. At our school in Iserlohn, however, there are no such holidays

commemorating heroes of the past, for obvious reasons.

During their stay in Lisbon, the students



lived with host families and had the unique possibility to get an insight into the Portuguese way of life. They saw the exceptional hospitality of their Portuguese hosts, who did everything to make their guests feel comfortable. Inevitably, the economic "crisis" also came up during the conversations. However, it has to be pointed out that the German students did not encounter any negative comments about the role of the country during the crisis. The atmosphere among the students was rather affectionate and friendly.

Apart from the project work, the hosts also showed the group of more than 70 participants around their hometown. Together, they experienced historic Lisbon on a walk through the "Chiado", a part of the city's old town.

There, the group was surprised by heavy rain showers - much to the delight of the Portuguese who had been suffering from draught for months. Furthermore, the programme also included a visit of Sitra, a small artist town in the greater Lisbon area and the "Cabo da Roca", Europe's most westerly point.

After a rich week of shared intercultural encounters, new experiences and new friendships, the farewell at the airport saw many tears. Although the project is going to end soon, the students promised to stay in touch and keep the new European connection alive.

"The experience in Portugal was awesome. First of all the family was very open-minded and kind

to me. The people there always helped us whenever we had any question. It was such a great experience for us Comenius-people, because we made new friends and met new cultures there. Besides this the programme was very well planned, we never got bored, we always saw a

new thing, for example the most western point in Europe. All in all it can be said that for us, the German Comenius people, it was very nice to see Portugal and we'll hope to come back!" (Mert Erduman)

22nd August 2012 Start of the Comenius Project Group

"Since the beginning of this school year the organization of the Comenius project has changed. In the first year students worked for the project in extracurricular groups. Now the Comenius project is an integral part of their timetable for most Comenians. Some members of Comenius Year 1 could no longer continue their work because of their new timetable, whereas there were some new students who joined the project. After I started working with the group, I quickly became part of the team. The group helped me a lot in that regard because they were very open-minded, which might also be related to the fact that half of the students of the new group have

not been a part of the Comenius project in the first year." (Lukas Hädicke)



The members of the new project group:

Jacqueline Adolph, Kristina Arndts, Sarah Baasner, Paulina Battista, Vanessa Brintrup, Mert Erduman, Carolin Gerbrecht, Lukas Hädicke, Viktor Haraburov, Justin Jenderny, Jos Karnath, Laura Kauf, Annika Koch, Florian Meister, Mathias

Mertke, Felix Müller, Laura Reitmajer, Jeanette Rößner, Nina Schnabel, Katharina Schönwälder, Fatih Tokgöz, Wangke Yang. The teacher of the project group is Mr. Alkewitz.

Friendship in a far-away country – The Comenius Meeting in Finland

For six Comenius students and their two teachers the journey on 2nd October 2012 went smoothly. After a 2½ - hour flight from Düsseldorf to Helsinki and a 5-hour coach journey to Suonenjoki we reached our destination, Finland's strawberry capital of Suonenjoki.

At our late arrival at 10pm our host families were already waiting for us. I was incredibly heartily accepted by my host family, and so was my Greek flatmate in the same family. After a sumptuous meal until shortly before midnight we went to bed incredibly tired and more than satisfied.

The next day we met the other Comenians from our project group. With "ice-breaking" games in

the gym everybody got to know each other. After lunch in the school cafeteria we made some traditionally Finnish dishes in the school kitchen, blueberry cake and "Karelian pasties".

When we had a guided walk through the school we detected more and more differences to our school. The school is much smaller than our school. Students have a wide choice of games such as billiard, table football, musical instruments or the school kitchen in their break time. They can also use laptops in the halls to access the Internet. For us it was highly unusual that most Finish students put off their shoes on entering the school and walking on their socks! We

were told that they feel at home in their school, and at home they don't wear shoes, so why should they wear shoes at school?

The next big programme point was our presentations. On touchboards we presented our results, powerpoint presentations, self-made films or role plays dealing with our topic "stereotypes".

For me it was interesting that some countries don't have stereotypes about some other countries – countries which are very far away, such as Finland and Portugal. Most prejudices of neighbouring countries are quite similar though (Germans always being on time, drinking beer, wear



ing leather shorts; Greeks eating olives, feta cheese and gyros; Italian men being machos wearing gold bracelets, Poles drinking vodka, Finnish being depressive, always listening to metal music etc.).

We found that these stereotypes are more or less wrong. People are people, not role players of stereotypes.

Here is one example of our results:

Germany: Presentation of different cultures in various school books

by:
Sarah Baasner, Lena and Denise Pühl

Italian school books

Only presentations of Italians (no other people): No international aspects

Old / ancient buildings, Roman culture is maintained

Pictures of many well-known people (e.g. Eros Ramazzotti)

Depiction of people making music

Scenes from private life: silent, familiar atmosphere

many cars (full cars parks, Fiat cars and some luxury brands)

Italian language book

Younger people have a lot of free time, while adults have to work

Although Italians are supposed to eat only fruits and vegetables etc., they are also shown eating: pizza, wine, water - and they are happy :-)

Maths book

- On many pages famous scientists are presented (e.g. Leonardo da Vinci (Italy), Pythagoras (Greece), Marie Curie (Poland))

→ (only short) introductions about these scientists, if any at all

→ German scientists are covered by the largest articles

Book of Religious Education

- No entries about European countries / cultures

→ a quite neutral book

(Exceptions: Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam)

Today: Pictures from international art galleries from Italian, French and German painters

Past: Not so many pictures

Physics book:

In the past: photos and descriptions of scientists from a lot of different countries:

- Marie Curie - Poland
- Isaak Newton - Great Britain
- Galileo Galilei - Italy
- Aristoteles - Greece
- Albert Einstein - Germany

Today: Nearly the same

Polish language book

Kind and familiar people

Helpful

Sporty (no couch-potatoes)

In the evening we met with other Finish, Greek, and Portuguese girls. We had dinner together and played some board games. For us Germans it was a more or less unusual way to spend our evening, but we had a lot of fun.

On Thursday we had the opportunity to visit our host students' lessons. Our Geography teacher tried to teach in a way that made it possible for us to take part. Then we had Maths. To our surprise we found Maths quite easy, because we knew the topic and the tasks were much easier than at home.

After lunch at school we went by coach to a lake in Saunaniemi. There was a big holiday house with a big room for groups at the centre. There we had a round talk about our experiences with prejudices and our private visions for our personal future. Lots of students had very similar hopes and fears about their future, some wanted to go abroad or become rich and famous, others wanted to have a secure job and start a family.

The Finnish also gave us Finnish lessons in small groups. We learned some sentences (e.g. how to greet somebody) and words – "hei" or "hallo" or "kitos" for "Thank you." After the private Finnish lesson we went out to the camp fire, here we

could warm ourselves, sing songs, barbecue sausages, talk with each other.

The highlight of the day for us was the sauna next to the lake. The courageous ones had a jump into the verrrry cold water after sauna. So it was no wonder that we were quite exhausted after this trip.

On Friday we went by coach to the city of Kuopio, which is as big (or small) as Iserlohn, the 8th biggest city of the country. One of the sights in Kupio is the 75 m high Puijo-Tower. On top of it there is a platform with a revolving restaurant, and in spite of wind and rain we could enjoy a stunning view of the lakes and islands in this lake district.

Afterwards we went into Kupio city. Our host showed us typical Finnish shops, where some of us bought some souvenirs. The next activity was "glowbowling", bowling in the dark with black light and music. Although our bowling skills were quite fundamental, we had a lot of fun.

For Friday evening the Finnish had organized a farewell party for us. Here we could talk to, and dance with, the other Comenians. For us it was remarkable how open the Greeks are, who were the first on the dance floor, while most Germans, Polish or Portugese stood in the corner of the room, a bit shy. But after some time everybody felt free to enjoy the party.

"We again found that the Comenius project offered us fascinating insights into peers from other countries, which made us more open and outgoing. A lot of personal contacts and friendships started, and will surely be continued via the Internet. We all really enjoyed our visit in Suonenjoki. (Laura Kauf)



"I had never been in Finland before, so I was very excited. In the Comenius group I met a lot of new students from different countries, which was great, and a great experience for me. My host

family was friendly and hospitable, they received me with open arms and hearts and I felt very comfortable. - The topic during the trip was "stereotypes". I hope the others weren't disappointed to see that we weren't always on time and didn't wear "lederhosen" (leather shorts)." (Laura Reitmajer)

"My host families in Finland and Greece were very friendly, both treated me like a family member. Especially because of my vegan lifestyle they made a great effort to 'help' me, I found this very nice and I ate very much! I really felt at home." (Laura Kauf)

1st December 2012: Stenner Open Day

This year we organized a Comenius stall on the Stenner Open Day, too. Compared to last year this time we had more to present: information about our Comenius project on posters and hand-outs with information about our project and some recipes (see below), a slide show with photos from our visits, music from our partner countries, a game for the younger ones to match flags and (English) countries. The highlights were a raffle with Europe-related prizes and a cold buffet with specialities from most of our countries

"In the Finnish culture it is important to go to the sauna. Most of the Finnish families have their own sauna in their bathrooms or in a special cabin outside the house. On the third day we went to a public sauna, which was called "Saunaniemi". This was very funny because first we stayed at the sauna and when it got too warm we ran outside and into the cold lake. I really like this day. - All in all the trip to Finland was very exciting and I learned much about the country. I enjoy the time and hope to visit Finland a second time."(Kristina Arndts)



A recipe from our partner school in GREECE:

TZATZIKI

All ingredients to the taste:

2 bowls of strained yoghurt

- 1 (or 2 or 3 or 4) cloves of garlic
- a pinch of salt
- 1 spoons of sliced dill
- 2 spoons of vinegar
- 5 spoons of olive oil
- 1 cucumber, peeled and well-strained

Place all the ingredients in a bowl, mix well and put in the fridge. Best when served cold.

The Comenius Meeting in Germany – Our school hosts Comenians

Programme:

Monday 10.12.2012

Arrival

Tuesday 11.12.2012

Morning:

Reception in Iserlohn Townhall
Guided walk of Iserlohn
Comenius presentations, part 1
Lunch in the school cafeteria

Afternoon:

Comenius presentations, part 2
Visit to Iserlohn Christmas market

Evening:

Students: families / Teachers: dinner

Wednesday 12.12.2012

Day trip to Bonn (Museum of German History) and Cologne (Cologne Cathedral; city centre)
As German students have to write 2 examination papers (on Wednesday and Thursday mornings), they won't be able to join us on our day trip.

Evening:

Students: families
Teachers: dinner

Thursday 13.12.2012

Morning:

Students: Attending classes; Teachers: Comenius Team Meeting
Guided walk of the school
Lunch in the school cafeteria

Afternoon:

Comenius project: evaluation
Visit of Dortmund Christmas Market

Evening:

Students: families (still undecided: a farewell party) / Teachers: dinner

Thursday 14.12.2012

departure

Germany at Christmastime – A picturesque meeting in Iserlohn

From December 10th to December 14th 2012 we were the hosts of 32 students and 10 teachers.

We had prepared different activities for our guests and worked out presentations dealing with the topics of "school trips" and "school exchanges". These preparations took us almost half a year. Since the students were supposed to live in host families we had to find exchange partners for each student and teacher.

In the course of Monday, 6 to 8 students and two of their teachers from each country arrived in snowy Iserlohn. We had to pick up our guests at school, the Italian guests at the station, and spent the rest of the day with them.

Our guests were really exhausted after the journeys, so we met with some other exchange students and their partners to spend a relaxing even-

ing together. During dinner we started getting to know each other.

On Tuesday, the next morning, we went to school for the first three lessons, while our guests were welcomed by our mayor in the city hall.



They told us that they had been really excited about that. Afterwards, our guests had a guided walk through Iserlohn and especially the Polish girls were really enthusiastic about Iserlohn, be-

cause they thought the city was much more attractive than their own city. The snow was quite unfamiliar to our Mediterranean guests.

Subsequently, the presentations of the different countries were presented in our "Aula" (assembly hall"), and it was really exciting to get to know information about the other schools and their countries - although it was pretty exhausting to listen to so many groups. Of course, these presentations were delivered in English. Occasionally, we also had lunch together in our cafeteria which was an appreciated alternation. After the presentations we spent our free time together with our



guests. Most of us strolled through the town or the Christmas market of Iserlohn.

On Wednesday most of the German students had to write their 'Grundkurs' (basic course) exams. Since we also had to get prepared for the 'Leistungskurs' (advanced course) exams the following day, our guests spent this days without us. At 7.30 am they went by coach to Bonn – over snow-slippery and jammed motorways – and to visit a museum presenting German history. Afterwards they went to Cologne, having a guided walk of Cologne Cathedral and exploring the city of Cologne, which was one of the highlights during their stay in Germany. Our guests were very happy that there was no snow in Cologne, at least this was the first thing they told us when they arrived in Iserlohn.

On Thursday our guests had the opportunity to attend the lessons of year 10. Many of them wanted to attend the Spanish lesson, later we were told that some of our guests had even participated more actively than the German students. It became obvious that there are great

differences between the different countries in terms of foreign language learning.

Over the course of the day further similarities and differences became obvious in our evaluation groups. Prior to this, we arranged groups of about 8 persons, one student from each country, and met at an appointed place and time. We had to discuss one of the six central questions and our

results should be presented to the others in our assembly hall, later. These questions dealt with the similarities and differences as well as the wishes of the different students of the different schools in terms of "school trips" and "school exchanges". During this discussion we also

had the opportunity to get to know the youths of the other nations, apart from our own exchange student.

Everyone was really interested in the skiing-trip and we were envied for our many school exchanges since most of the countries only visit their neighboring countries and for Finland for example it is very hard to go anywhere. We found out that our school offers a lot of trips and exchanges in comparison to the other schools. Therefore, we get the chance to have a lot of intercultural experiences but eventually we attend a school certificated as a "European School". After we had lunch together in our cafeteria again we went to the station to go to Dortmund by train.

The trip to Dortmund was very entertaining for the students as well as the teachers because we presented movies by doing pantomime and the others had to guess which movie had been presented. That was really funny. In Dortmund we visited the Christmas market, ate roasted almonds and went shopping. Our Mediterranean

guests wondered why the German people like to stand in the cold to eat and drink. That was a question we could not really answer but again it became obvious that the different countries really have diverse habits and customs.

On our last common evening we had organized a party for all participating students. Everyone brought something to drink and to eat and we were dancing together. It was a very successful last evening.

The few days together with our Comenius guests again passed too quickly, nevertheless it was a fantastic experience and we hope to see our exchange partners again.

"It was so exciting for me to be a host because I had the chance to represent Germany to the other students by showing them the presentations, which we worked out in little groups at schools.

"Besides this, I had a great opportunity to get to know the other students from the different countries. Furthermore, I want to mention, that the students from the different countries were very polite and they represented their countries in a

good way, showing us a lot of brilliant presentations." (Jacqueline Adolph)

"I experienced a great time with my guest student. My family and me tried everything to give her the best life here in Germany. And it seems like it worked, my guest student and me are still in contact, I've just received a holiday card from her." (Jos Karnath)

"It was a new experience to be a host. I had a lot of fun with my exchange students. We often met with other students and spent time together. We came along with each other very well. I became acquainted with new people from different countries and we had a lot of fun together. It was a very special time that I will never forget, and I was sad when they left." (Jeanette Rößner)

"I had an Italian exchange partner in Germany, who I already knew from my exchange trip to Italy. He was funny and we had a great week together. It was such a pity that they only stayed in Germany for one week." (Florian Meister)

High Culture and Open People – The Comenius Meeting in Poland

On Monday 8th April 2013, we, a group of four students and our two teachers Mrs Krenczer and Mr Alkewitz took off from Dortmund Airport to fly to Kattowice.

After a relaxing flight the group was transferred to the host school in Chorzów – Iserlohn's sister city – , where most host students were waiting to welcome their guests from the other countries.

The next day was our presentation day in the school auditorium. In the weeks before all Comenius students had worked on the topic "Visions of Our Schools in the Future": What will lessons be like? What will students learn? How will they learn? What will school buildings be like in 30 years' time?

On the presentation day all Comenians presented their results to the others. We saw quite a lot of fascinating results, as films, powerpoint

presenta



tions, free talks, role plays, interviews a digital walk through a future school.

It was interesting to see the great variety of visions. Some students, e.g. from Portugal and Italy, had very similar visions. Most of us thought that technology will play an important role in the future school education. The Finns learned that many a vision was already a reality

at their school, such as online language courses through video conferences.

After lunch break at school with delicious Silesian food most of us went to a big shopping mall nearby, and afterwards went to a "bonfire" and barbecue in the Silesian Park, one of the biggest parks in Europe.

Next day the Comenius group had the opportunity to meet a representative of the city of Chorzów in the town hall, who gave a very warm welcome to our international group of students. We were able to go to the top of the townhall to see the Chorzów skyline from high above – we Germans were reminded of some regions of our Ruhr Region, with coal mines and heavy industries shaping the city.

One of the highlights of our stay in Poland was the performance of the play "The Merchant of Venice" by William Shakespeare in Chorzów theatre. Hundreds of parents, students and guests watched in amazement, how professionally competent and entertaining our host students were staging the play – in the original English of the 16th century.

On the last day we went on a trip to Wieliczka salt mine and to Krakov. To start the guided walk in the mine we had to go down more than 800 steps – which was quite challenging for some students – and teachers ... Wieliczka is an abandoned mine which serves as a museum today to show people how salt was produced in the past. It was quite interesting to learn that down there are quite a number of small chapels and even one big cathedral (where people can even marry), all hewn in the salt.

After the salt mine we went by coach to Krakow. After a guided walk we could stroll through this wonderful city with our host students and buy some souvenirs – amber was very beautiful, and relatively cheap, and Krakov sausages have brought home the taste of Silesia ...

After our return home in Chorzów we prepared for our little farewell party in one of the clubs of

the city, where we had the opportunity to say good-bye to our fellow students. It was interesting to see how different musical tastes can be 😊 After a lot of hugging and kissing and crying and saying goodbye we had a last dinner in a Chorzów restaurant. Here we could eat typical Silesian food, e.g. pirogi, which are a bit like small pastry pockets filled with vegetable or meat.

Our flight back to Dortmund Airport was uneventfully normal – something we've come to appreciate a lot after we had heard many an adventurous story, of overbooked flights and aircraft engine damages, by the other Comenians.

Our visit in Chorzów was a great experience. In our host families we felt like kings and queens, they did everything to make us feel comfortable – and to put on weight, as we found the Silesian food - which is similar to our Westphalian food – cooked in families is extremely tasty. Our knowledge of English has improved, English being the only language that all students and teachers could speak. We had contact to fellow students from five similar, but also different countries and cultures. We experienced Polish hospitality and friendliness. (Lukas Hädicke et al.)

"My host family in Poland was very great. The atmosphere in the family was very good and friendly. The parents were very kind to me and always asked me if I wanted anything to eat, because in Poland they love food." (Mert Erduman)

"In Poland I learned a lot about the way they live and how they deal with people from other countries. Their food is incredible! My family showed me all kinds of Silesian, it was awesome! Polish people are so open-minded and incredibly accommodating, that it made me feel at home and included. It was a great experience!" (Carolin Gerbrecht)

Radio MK: "Iserlohn Stenner students get to know Europe"



You can get used to a reporter's microphone ...

On 6th May 2013 reporter J. Ehrlich from our local radio station "Radio MK" visited our school to record interviews with a small group of students from the Comenius project. Representatives of all the six meetings with our partner schools talked with him about their experiences during the 2-year project and the journeys they

"On Monday, the sixth of May, the reporter Johannes Ehrlich from our local radio "Radio MK" came to our school to interview some of our Comenius group (Nina, Laura, Kristina, Mert, Justin, Carolin, Lukas, Annika) and our teachers Mr. Alkewitz and Mrs. Windisch. We all visited one of the countries which are involved in the Comenius project and Mr. Ehrlich questioned us about our experiences during the time we participated in this project. Each country (Finland, Greece, Portugal, Italy, Poland and Germany) was represented by at least one student. At first we talked about the project and our stays in the countries without the microphone in order to become a little bit more relaxed. When we were ready to say something into the microphone, Mr. Ehrlich asked questions like "Was it easy for you to get integrated into your host family?", "Did you have any prejudices?", "Did you become aware of the finan-

cial crisis in Greece?", "Which were the greatest differences between Germany and the country you visited?", "What was the topic you had to present during your stay in the foreign country?", "What do you think about the Comenius project?". Everyone had a lot to tell and we all agreed that the Comenius project is a good opportunity to get to know much about foreign countries, their inhabitants, food, culture, manners and especially their hospitality." (Annika Koch)

took part in. What did you experience on your journeys?

What was your overall gain in the project? Do you feel that Europe has come closer to you?

Do you still have contact to students of your partner schools?

Students' answers to these – and many other – questions showed their involvement in the project and the intensity of their experience, and incidentally they almost got used to speaking to a reporter's microphone ...

As a radio reporter he was also looking for very special experiences, good and bad highlights. He didn't find, though, any of the last category.

The trailers were broadcast on two consecutive days and can be downloaded from the school homepage. Mr Ehrlich's trailers (which means "honest, truthful") were a credit to his name, they drew a fairly genuine acoustic picture of the Comenians' experiences.

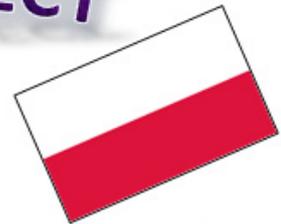
" I'd say the interviews were a good recap, talking about the facts and results of Comenius. It was important to do an interview with and for the radio, to show our experiences to other people in our region. And I would say Comenius is important for Europe and our future." (Justin Jenderny)

The Polish Comenius Experience

COMENIUS PROJECT



POLAND



Chorzów - Akademicki Zespół
Szkoł Ogólnokształcących





Akademicki Zespół Szkół
Ogólnokształcących w Chorzowie



Junior and Senior High School in Chorzów consists of the Juliusz Słowacki High School and Bilingual Junior High School. Since 2007 the school has been under the scientific patronage of the University of Silesia.

Bilingual Junior High School provides its students with the extended programme of English language and a part of the classes in Maths and Science are also held in English. The Juliusz Słowacki High School, with a vast range of subjects taught, has always been the source of academic knowledge. The principal task and duty of the school is to develop young people's interests and to prepare students for public external examinations and for their future university studies.

Another goal of our school is to teach young people how to function in the modern world and Europe. All students learn two foreign languages: English and, depending on the class, French, Spanish or German. To make learning languages more effective and interesting our school organizes numerous trips and language camps in Spain, France, Germany and the United Kingdom.

In 1996 European Education classes were introduced as the extra-curricular subject. Students can learn more about the European Union, its history, institutions and opportunities that it cre-

ates for the citizens of the member countries. In order to observe the integration process in practice, our school co-operates with many schools abroad.

We are also trying to make our students and graduates aware of the threats and problems of the contemporary world. We teach tolerance towards other nations, cultures, religions and encourage them to oppose aggression, violence and human rights violations. One of the ways to attain these goals are school geographical expeditions organized since 1991 and aimed mainly at the countries of the south and south-eastern Asia and Africa. During one of such expeditions our students helped to rebuild a school in Sri Lanka that had been destroyed by tsunami.

The Junior and Senior High School in Chorzów is renowned as one of the region's best schools. Situated in Upper Silesia, the most densely populated and industrialized region in Poland, our school retains high position in the yearly ranking of high schools. Among our students and graduates are a lot of winners of national and international competitions. Probably the most well-known graduate of our school is Jerzy Buzek – the Prime Minister of Poland from 1997 to 2001 and the President of the European Parliament from 2009 to 2012.

Polish students in Greece

Comenius Project Mobility has been an enriching experience. Not only did we have an opportunity to practice our English, but also we could learn about the differences between our countries. Personally, I'm a huge fan of such projects so I was excited to take part in Comenius right after I heard about it. Why? Because of the people...!



I knew the name of my host in Greece a few weeks before I was going there, so we could get to know each other by mail and we ended up getting on really well even though we had never even seen each other.

But before the pleasures of the trip to Greece we had to face the more difficult part - preparations...

We did really great though! What we had to prepare was a presentation about a typical day in our school. But it was so typical for us we had no idea what we should focus on, everything seemed not special enough for such a project. We ended up with a pretty long presentation, but not as long as the other countries.

Seems that despite the language and habits differences we still face similar difficulties. All the presentations were worth seeing, though we ran out of time because of the amount of information we all wanted to share so in the end Greeks, being hosts, decided to let the others use their share of time... and they performed the other day!

Almost two years ago I was on Comenius mobility in Greece in Volos. It is a modern port-city, located in the heart of Greece, between the sea and the mountains, with rich cultural life, and what I enjoyed the most, exciting and entertaining nightlife.

This city has a long naval tradition and is strictly connected with the well-known myth about Jason and the Argonauts.

We had a chance to try the local and national cuisine. The views were marvelous, especially at night. There was a promenade worth seeing. Every day at this school started with Orthodox prayers at the ground outside, each day conducted by a different student. As the school in Volos is a musical one, we were invited to a concert - even teachers played for us some pieces of traditional Greek music. The first thing I noticed was that they also had uniforms, but the truth is that they don't have to wear uniforms every day, only for special occasions. Moreover, we had an opportunity to learn traditional Greek dance – Zorba.



Each class has its own classroom and there they have almost all lessons. Those classrooms were pretty big and well lit. All of them looked the same unlike in our school, where each class has different appearance. We also were participating in celebrations of 17th of November. We had a trip to the mountains in Makrynitsa. There were a lot of picturesque views. After school we had a lot of time to make new friendships, to get to know the Greek culture. We were welcomed warmly in Greece. I remember my staying there as one of the best periods in my life because of the people I met there. They were so hospitable and kind. I am grateful that I had an opportunity to go there and see another part of the world with its rich culture. I would like to visit this country again in the future and meet all of my friends I have there.

My name is Mateusz. Last year I took part in the exchange project Comenius with the boy from Greece. His name is Victor. I had never spoken with him before we met in the Greek city – Volos. Therefore I was worried how to recognize him. I told myself 'Don't worry. Everything is going to be all right. 'And I was right. He recognized me when I just got out of the bus. I was very happy. I felt relieved. These few days in Volos were really great. Victor's family is really incredible and hospitable (especially his mother - Stella). I felt really comfortable. I had my own bathroom, small kitchen and a huge balcony with beautiful views... It was great!

Almost every day we had a party. I wasn't bored. In my opinion Greeks are great people. Victor kept saying two sentences: 'Greeks are crazy' and 'Mateusz – the best guy of the school'. I'll never forget that time.



Our journey began at Pyrzowice airport and ended in Krakow. A few days of great fun. I'm sure I'll never forget it. The journey took us quite a long time. First we traveled by plane and then by bus. It was really tiring. When we came to Volos it was about 10 pm. I was hosted by Anna-Maria. She is a very nice girl. Anna and her family showed me a real Greek hospitality. First day we spent at her school, she showed me what their lessons looked like. The interesting thing was that this was a music school and I had never been in such a place. In the evening we were invited to a music concert at her school and it was really beautiful experience. We had a chance to get to know better another culture. One evening Anna-Maria took me bowling with her friends.

Anna-Maria is a great person. She is a caring, nice and very friendly girl. She showed me Volos and Greek habits. I'll always remember it as an exciting adventure.

My name is Magda and last year in November I took part in an exchange between Finland, Portugal, Greece, Germany and Italy called "Comenius". I went to Greece for five days with some of my friends from the Polish school. We had a great time. I had never thought before that after just a few days I can miss someone so much. I was hosted by Panagiotis and to be honest I was really terrified before the day that I met him. But I shouldn't have been! I need to admit that his family was very hospitable. They cared about me as about a regular member of their family. They wanted me to have a great time in Volos and they managed to do it.

Panagiotis showed me the way of life in Greece; we were laughing, playing games and eating some delicious traditional dishes. Until now (and it has been over a year after the exchange) I have a contact with Greek people, because they are just like me even if they live in a completely different country with a completely different tradition. The exchange showed me that people from all over the world are very similar and we can't be scared of getting to know other people. It was a great adventure for me and I am really glad that I could participate in Comenius project. I encourage everyone to take part in projects like that.

Polish students in Greece: Julia Gerlich, Aleksandra Kotula, Ewelina Liszczyk, Magdalena Michalik, Mateusz Bąk.



Polish students in Portugal

YUP! It's today we're leaving for Lisbon. Meeting at 8am at the 'so called' train station in Katowice. First we're going to Warsaw by train, then by bus, then by PLANE. We, I mean – Kinga, Agata, Klaudia & Michał & Mrs Baryła and Mrs Mucharska & Mr Fabjański.

27th February, Paris

The airport is nice. Nice toilets. Two flights one day. To Paris and then to Lisbon. The airport in Paris is huge. So many people crowding everywhere. Yeah and I ate a real French croissant.

27th February, somewhere between Paris and
Lisbon

There's a man sitting next to me, working on his Mac. He seemed serious and introvert at a time, but then he started asking about us and talking about Lisbon, which is his home-city and... I want to be there! Right now!!!

28th February, Rita's house

Here I am at my host's home. Sooo sleepy.... But I've got to tell you my story! It's been a looong long day. Three airports, two flights and here um... people are so outgoing! We were kissing and hugging just as if we had known each other. Honestly! And it was true. And it was lovely – a great first impression of Portugal. Then I was taken to the restaurant at the river bank by 'my family'. It was situated just under a modern bridge looking like (and designed by the same architect as) the famous Golden Gate. It feels so American, really. I ordered a 'hamburger Portuguesa' and tried a traditional Portuguese cheese made of sheep's milk, with still-warm rolls! Yum! And that's just a beginning... Nighty - nighty!

28th February, home
(yeah I DO feel here like at home)

The night was cold – they don't have any central heating, but the day was really warm and yet so spring-like. Sun, here it comes! Today we had a kinda individual day – just with our school team. We went sightseeing. Generally. Just a first touch of Lisbon. And I was at school in the morning. Rita's school. They have quite a lot of black people here. Cool. They were surprised we don't have any. And boys are cute. But the language seems strange. Looks like Spanish, but sounds like Ger-

27th February, a train

man, Russian, French and a little bit of Spanish mixed together. Strange.

We attended a ride in one of those famous 'yellow trams' in the old part of the city. We could nearly touch the walls of old tenement houses outside and many of them were covered with beautiful tiles. Amazing. And those ancient buildings, like a huge bridge over the road. We were passing over it on our way to school. We also had a sort of a walk to the Monument of Vasco da Gama and other Portuguese explorers in Belem (one of the districts). Huge one. Placed at a river bank. Today we've used many different means of transport – the underground, a train, a tram, a car... we used our feet quite intensively, too. What a day! And now Rita and I are watching some funny movies I don't understand anything of – Portuguese, of course!

29th February, bed

This was a first day of serious school- and culture-exploring. And meeting people. Sooo many awesome people to meet! First I was at a few lessons – Portuguese – I didn't get ANY-single-thing. But no problem. Then we had COMENIUS presentations. And so our trip to Portugal was to be not only a fantastic way of making new friends, but also an opportunity to increase our general knowledge about educational systems of European countries. One of the most long-awaited part of the visit was a lecture about differences and similarities between curricula and school habits now and twenty years ago. Each group was supposed to prepare a speech and a short presentation about the history of their school. Greeks, Germans, Italians, Finnish, Portuguese, and Polish people. We were the best, of course, but the entire 'conference' was interesting.

Later we were all taken to Sintra. This is the name of an old village surrounding Lisbon. Very beautiful. Old architecture along with plenty of green and pieces of art, like funny modern sculptures. Sounds nice, doesn't it? We had our lunch there. It was so much fun. But the best was still waiting for us. The Atlantic Ocean.



So spacious. Incredible. The first time I saw an ocean and it was breathtaking, really. I took a load of photos, but none of them can show the nature of the ocean. So huge, even a bit dangerous, but still very beautiful. Hard to describe. An essence of freedom – that’s what the ocean is. And finally the sunset. Sunset. A ball of fire drowning in everlasting waters... At night, we went to the centre of Lisbon to have fun. Firstly, ice cream at worldwide famous ‘Santini’. It was AWESOME. Then a bit of clubbing. FUN! Comenius people are cool. The city at night is beautiful. Anyway, the place is quite dangerous at about midnight, so we haven’t spent there much time. Two hours or so and we’ve decided to go home. I’m exhausted, anyway!

1st March, warm bed,
Lisbon – city of a dream

Today, after school we went for a walk around Lisbon. A tour. Now I know for sure. I want to live here. Somehow in the future. It’s just my ‘ever’. But the weather was quite spiteful. It was raining. No, it was rather a downpour. Charming. Because of that, we weren’t able to see the most beautiful and full of charm place - the Castle of São Jorge – a medieval castle, ruins actually, that compose perfectly with trees all around. It’s a sort of secret, medieval garden, full of stony steps, plants and flowers, situated on a hill. Another attraction is a panoramic view of the city, one of the most beautiful view points in entire city. Such a pity we weren’t able to stay there longer... Later we went to the ‘Colombo’ shopping centre. Huge one. We ate there some cupcakes and fast food, did some shopping and went home. Now we’re watching TV again. The Simpsons – they’re perfect everywhere. And at last – I feel dry and warm. Good night, cause the next day... is the last day. Boo-hoo...

3rd March, Paris

So here we are, in Paris again. Neither so enthusiastic nor fresh this time. Sleepy, to be honest. I cannot remember very well, what I was doing yesterday. So much happened. I don’t know much about the flight. I was sleeping, I guess. We were all sad at the airport, forced to say good bye. The morning before was our last visit at school. Then we went to a modern square of Lisbon, where we visited the Oceanarium. There were fish and sharks... It was cool. Then we went for a lunch to the shopping mall. Then we went for the last walk in the centre of Lisbon, just me and Rita. I bought some souvenirs, took some photos. I got some souvenirs from Rita’s family... it was sooo kind and cute and anyway... then we had a PARTY.

Music, fun. Fun. Fun. Fun. Until 2 am. 4 am and I said: ‘Bye Lisbon see you soon let us have a nap!’ So I’m having a nap in a moment and you need to know it was an awesome exchange.



Bye Comenius!

Polish students in Portugal: Klaudia Braczyk, Kinga Kostoń, Agata Słowik, Aleksandra Sznepka, Michał Widuch.



Undeniably, the mobility to Italy gave us a lot of new experiences. Our communication skills improved a lot. Personally, I am very glad to be a participant of the Comenius Project. It allows me to develop my personality and makes me reach my targets in life, such as being more concentrated on interpersonal skills or building up team work because it is so significant nowadays.

Furthermore, I had the possibility to make quite a lot of new friends. Not only was there the occasion to take a glance at some new customs, traditions and culture, but there was also some spare time to be spent nicely, in amusing way with new friends, for instance, at the party or at some trips (probably it is just a little bit out of topic but I have to admit that in reference to the 'excursion' to the waterfall, walking on wet stones wearing high-heels is a very ridiculous idea and also a tough activity).

As a matter of fact, I have learned something more about the Italian way of teaching and broadly speaking the system of education. To a certain extent, these two systems are similar, but some differences occur.

To start with an example: the lessons taught at Italian school are in the same classroom, of course with some obvious exceptions. To put it another way, students are under no obligation to change the classroom in order to attend their courses. They just stay in one room and wait for a tutor. On the contrary, in Poland students are to migrate from one classroom to another one.

Another difference exists in the system of grades. In Italy there is the continuous assessment as opposed to Poland. Nevertheless, the scale of grades is much higher (10) than in Poland (5 or 6). Consequently, the attitude of students to certain sub-

jects is somehow changeable. Thus, they have to concentrate more on something that is relevant and related to their future career or specialisations. Having said that, I suppose it is quite a good solution.

In conclusion I would like to say that in spite of those marginal differences and varieties I am glad to have seen some other educational system. Actually, I hope that we'll have some other occasions to meet again with friends and to make something like a gathering. Now I am just a little bit unhappy because of the end of the project even though there was a lot of hard work to be done (especially with the presentations). It's also important to keep in touch with our new friends.

I am very content and proud to be the participant of the Comenius Project and I fully recommend being a member of the mentioned project.

The presentations shown during our meeting in Chiavenna touched upon the subject of Europe in our schools both 20 years ago and now.



In our own presentation, conducted inside the cozy assembly hall of Istituto di Istruzione Superiore "Leonardo da Vinci" we highlighted the long way Poland has come since joining the EU, and the changes that were made to accommodate the growing need for integration. We mentioned our own graduate - Jerzy Buzek - that served as the President of the European Parliament until January 2012.

Another topic we detailed to our listeners were the many ways in which our school reaches so many countries around Europe and the world; student exchanges, theme days, lectures conducted by teachers from abroad as well as our interna-

tional academic successes in contests propagating knowledge about integration with Europe.

After our presentation was over, it was time for the other countries to shine; each group detailed their own history of European integration through colorful pictures, movies as well as fascinating presentations. Afterwards, we were given T-shirts as a souvenir from Chiavenna and joined together to sing along with the sounds of guitar.



Chiavenna, a small city in the valley hidden in The Alps near the Swiss border. The last stop of the railway, the next one could be only a huge belly of a mountain. Even though the city is small, the amount of beauty there isn't small at all. Besides the towering mountain peaks, there are a lot of things to see in the city itself and in the neighborhood – breathtaking waterfalls, cute little cafes, ancient baptistery, impressive Vertemate Palace and much more. Being treated by my host mom with the Italian cuisine was another thing to die for. My host family gave me also the opportunity to discover the real Italian driving, very fast and very dangerous. Driving like this, listening to American rap music, was an extraordinary and a bit scary experience.

People in the city were extremely positive in the Italian way and people from Comenius Project were extremely positive just because they're wonderful. We had a lot of fun exchanging cultures, teaching each other foreign alphabets and a thing that turned out to be very popular during the stay – tongue twisters. During the presentation time we sang along to the sounds of the international guitars. It was an amazingly spent time, opportunity to feel how a small town can unite the entire Europe.

Last year I spent a few days in a very beautiful and amazing place – Chiavenna. This northern Italy

village sits at the foot of the Swiss Alps. My Italian family, the Martocchi, have lived in this lovely surrounding all their life. The hosts are a wonderful family with the most amazing house. They have a special place where they took me for a short walk.

Elena's mother cooked a lot of good things. I enjoyed a couple of special dinners there - the most simple, amazing lasagna, a very good pizza, risotto and of course tiramisu. I think that Italian cuisine is really very good and healthy. Every morning I had some cake and cappuccino for breakfast. It couldn't get any more typical Italian. The pure beauty in Chiavenna lies in the small restaurants and bars, where you can have cappuccino or spritz. Tourists hardly ever come here and that makes this place more special. I will continue returning to Chiavenna to see my Italian friends. It's one of the most special places on Earth for me.



Comenius, Italy 2012. It was one week. Just one week when I could rest. But it was not the most important thing about this mobility. We had the opportunity to meet great people, see beautiful places, feel like real Italians, unfortunately just for a week. Everybody wants to go for a holiday to warm countries. Italy is one of them. But we didn't visit the south. I am not sad because of that. We could see this country from the other side and not just like tourists.

The family I was staying with was so nice and easygoing. Even if they couldn't speak English very well they were trying to make my staying there the best. Every next trip to southern European countries shows that people living in these countries are very friendly, not afraid of getting to know new people and fun-loving. Italians spend a lot of time together. Thanks to this mobility we could take part in their life too. Every parent

wanted to meet other exchange student. They were preparing dinners and inviting us for them.



During this one week I could try traditional meals three times. We met in bigger groups, spent time together having fun, eating good food, talking about our countries and trying to say difficult things in each language. I like eating good food so I wanted to take some recipes for myself but I asked for them a little bit to late and nobody knew what I was talking about. We also visited some beautiful places. In Italy we had no time to be

bored.

Now I have hundreds of photos and when I watch them I can remember these beautiful days spent there. I hope we will meet again in the future.



Polish students in Italy: Kasia Błażejczyk, Kaja Kartańska, Karolina Konopka, Monika Palus, Ania Skipirzepa, Weronika Seiffert, Patrycja Światała, Thomas Trabinski.

Polish students in Finland

In my opinion meeting new people is the most important and interesting part of every Comenius mobility. When we were in Finland, we had this possibility too. The truth is that each nationality is a little bit different and as the topic of this exchange was 'stereotypes' we had a lot of time to share our ideas and find out all the differences in behavior and everyday routine. Personally I find all of these varieties an advantage because simply they make life less boring.

The nationality that in my opinion is the most similar to Poland is the host country - Finland. Their incredible hospitality made me feel at my host's home like a real member of family. Also Finnish students organized our free time in such a way that we never had the opportunity to get bored. Spending such an amount of time together with all of the nationalities helped us really get to know each other and I'm sure that all of the friendships that were born there are going to last long.



We spent most of our time in a large group of people from all Comenius countries. One evening we had a bonfire near the lake. There we could get to know each other and exchange our outlooks and roast marshmallows. One day we all went to the sauna, the other one we were in Kuopio. Unfortunately we were in Finland only a week

(exactly five days), but we tried to spend it in the best possible way, and I think we were successful. Most importantly, we gained lots of new friends.

Suonenjoki is located in the province of Eastern Finland and is part of the Northern Savonia region. The town has a population of 7.561. Suonenjoki is famous for its strawberries. It is also known as "the Strawberry Town". Lots of foreign people, mainly from Russia, come to Suonenjoki in summer to work on strawberry farms. That makes Suonenjoki the most international town of Finland in summer.



Our journey to Finland was full of pleasures, but we also had one important task: preparing a presentation concerning stereotypes about each of the Comenius countries. We came up with an idea that could make our presentation more extraordinary. We wrote a screenplay and organized a kind of performance. Each of us got a role of another nationality- Italian, Finnish, Greek, German and Portuguese. Our short play was showing a scene at the airport and every person presented some features characteristic for every country. It was a great fun for us but also for the audience - everybody was laughing, so the aim was reached! They could immediately recognize the nationality thanks to music, clothes and our exaggerated behavior.

Foreigners said many kind things about Poles, but we also heard some which were not so nice for us but still funny. It was really important not to care about it, because these were just stereotypes, and many of them turned out to be completely false.

For example, Finnish were not introvert, Italians were not shouting.

We have to remember that stereotypes are not always true, and we shouldn't "judge the book by its cover".

During our journey to Finland we were living in host families instead of a hotel. It is another part of Comenius Programme, contrived in order to acquaint better with local population, begin new friendships and get known as different culture visitors. Most of us were hosted by very good friends so we could spend time both with Finnish and Polish students. That helped us overcome shyness and after the first day of the trip we were talking and joking, sitting by a bonfire. We felt like we had known each other for years, not hours.

Our hosts narrated us Finnish history, culture and treated us like their own families. We were also able to try meals typical for that country and see the way of living abroad. In thus way we found out that in Finland people are living in very similar, little wooden houses, built near main roads, but although they are located far from each other, they still belong to one town. Because of that we chose the 'meeting point' in the town and our hosts showed their favorite places, like winter and summer sports playgrounds or lake with special wooden construction for people who want to jump into the water.

Living with host families also allowed us to learn how the Finnish spend free time in their houses. Basic things they do are: sauna, which is 'obligatory' for every building, listening to the music and playing with their pets.

Generally, it was an advantage both for us and our hosts, because of these few days together we could get to know each other better and improve our language skills. Altogether it was a really unforgettable experience!



Polish students In Finland: Martyna Danch, Katarzyna Książek, Zuzanna Kaczmarczyk, Dorota Lustyk, Katarzyna Radecka, Dominika Szymik, Dawid Fuchs.

Polish students in Germany

A week in Germany during Christmas time was a great opportunity for us to get to know the German culture. We could see how a typical German family looks and what its habits are. The Comenius Project gave us a chance to see the differences between Poland and Germany, or rather to see that there are hardly any differences between these two countries.

Our trip to Iserlohn took place from 10th till 14th of December, so that was a great moment to observe what the preparations before Christmas look like. The most charming thing we saw was the Christmas Market. We could feel the magic of upcoming Christmas everywhere. No matter where we went was the same - in every city we visited we could see countless signs of Christmas.



The most recognizable were Christmas markets, where we could buy some typical snacks like brittles, ginger breads, delicious fruit in chocolate or drink warm Glühwein. It all heightened this magical atmosphere. The greatest Market was in Köln, where we could hear live music - Christmas carols

and other Christmas songs played by local bands. Everyone was dancing, singing and just having fun.

The topic of our presentation was 'Trips abroad organized by our school'. We had started preparations three weeks before our journey to Germany. It was very hard work because of the huge amount of information that we had to collect. We started by searching through school historical documents, later we asked teachers about some facts and looked for photos from school trips.

Our school is very old and there is always something happening so finally we found so much information that we had to choose what is really important and worth including into the presentation. Finally, we chose: The Junior High School trip to England (organized by English teachers to improve our language skills), High School trips to Spain (just like trips to England but organized by Spanish teachers), Krzemieniec (a trip with the teacher of Polish to the place in Ukraine where our patron Juliusz Słowacki was born), trips to the United States of America (just for sightseeing) or skiing school trips to Piancavallo. But the largest and most impressive part was about the expeditions to Asia (mainly with the final destination in India). We even found a movie showing such an expedition, interviewed our Headmaster about it and put everything together.

Preparations had lasted until we left for Germany, so we were very stressed that we would forget our speeches or say it too fast or too quietly, but we managed to say everything clearly. Finally, our

presentation appeared to be very successful and we hope everybody enjoyed it.

We have to say that we were very lucky to find ourselves living with the family that hosted us in Germany. It felt like staying with a real family as the atmosphere they created at home was truly warm and open-hearted. According to the stereotype, the Germans like to eat well : thanks to our incredibly kind host mother we got a chance to taste locally well-liked food (the first prize goes to a green jelly with vanilla sauce for dessert!) and we were never hungry, even for a second.

We experienced real hospitality, every room in the house was open for us - it felt so nice to lie down in front of the fireplace in the evening, especially after the whole day of carrying an extremely heavy backpack full of delicious snacks prepared earlier that day for us by the host mom!

As mentioned above, the house we lived in during the stay in Germany was full of love. It was in December and Christmas was just around the corner with its spirit perceptible everywhere - also at home. The house was beautifully decorated, an embellished ribbon here, a fancy snowman over there. There was also a huge Advent Calendar pinned to the wall along the stairs. We found out it was our host family's tradition to attach sweets and little gifts to the Calendar so that children could collect them each day of Advent.



As it usually happens with the Comenius mobilities, we did not have much time to spend at home with our host family. In spite of that, whenever there was an occasion to sit around or have a meal together, we spent that time talking. Even though our host parents had not been using English for, as they said, many years, they were doing their best to express their opinions and therefore we did not have any problems with communication. We were really pleased to hear funny stories about the family members and also to gain some knowledge about the region we lived in.

As we said before, we had had a really good and satisfying relationship with our host family. These people must have had angelic patience for us: having two extra daughters at their place and not even saying a word of complaint when the bathroom was (obviously...) the most occupied and crowded room in the house! We are very thankful to our German hosts for making us feel a part of their family.



Polish students in Germany: Zuzanna Kaczmarczyk, Aleksandra Król, Julia Kulpa, Agata Piątek, Katarzyna Radecka, Joanna Suchomska.

Comenius Project – Visit To Poland

Akademicki Zespół Szkół Ogólnokształcących in Chorzów

8-12 April 2013

Programme



Sunday 7th April and Monday 8th April

Greece, Finland, Germany, Italy and Portugal, arrive in Chorzów.

Tuesday 9th April

9.00

Meeting at school. A short 'welcome ceremony'. Students get to know each other and teachers visit the school and meet Polish teachers.

11.00 – 13.30

Students' presentations "Schools in future".

13.30 – 14.15

Lunch at school prepared by Polish students and their parents.

14.20 – 15.00

Students work together in multinational groups preparing short tasks. Teachers can participate in classes they choose 😊

17.00

Teachers walk to the Silesian Park (one of the biggest parks in Europe). Students and teachers meet in the Upper Silesian Ethnographic Park (Open Air Museum). Singing, games, bonfire with sausages and other attractions.

19.30

Students leave with their hosts. Teachers have dinner at 'Kamienny Kasztel' restaurant

Wednesday 10th April

8.20

Meeting at the Town Hall in Chorzów – a short visit

9.00

Coming to school. Students have a chance to participate in classes and, if necessary, finish their tasks. Teachers' work session – evaluation of the whole Comenius project.

11.30 – 12.15

Early lunch at the school nearby

12.30 – 13.15

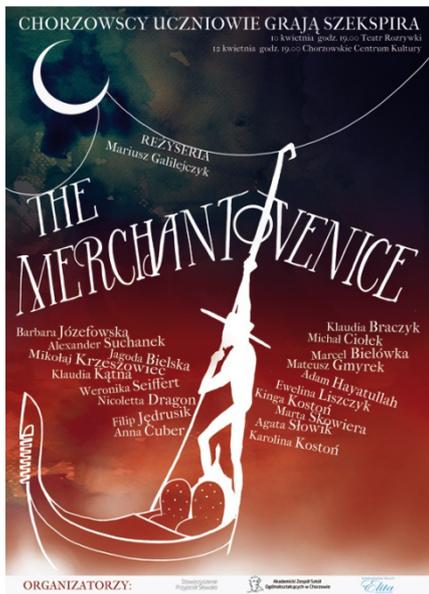
Students present what they prepared in their groups. Leaving school to get to the tram.

14.00 – 17.00

A trip to Katowice in an antique tram. Sightseeing walk in Katowice (the main city of Silesian Voivodeship)

19.00 – 20.00

Evening performance in Theatre Rozrywki prepared by the students of the host school 'The Merchant of Venice' by William Shakespeare (in English).



Thursday 11th April

7.30

Meeting at school.- departure to Medieval Wieliczka Salt Mine (by coach).

10.20 – 13.00

Visiting the salt mine.

13.30

Getting to Krakow (old capital city of Poland). Sightseeing walk in Krakow – the beautiful Market Square, The Renaissance Sukiennice (The Cloth Hall), Mariacki Church the Wawel castle.

18.00

Departure to Chorzow.

20.30

Dinner for teachers in Szygarka restaurant in Chorzow

Friday 12th April

Departure day for all countries ☹ except for Greece and Portugal ☺ These countries visit museum in Auschwitz.

Saturday 13th April

A day spent with families.

Sunday 14th April

Greece leaves very early in the morning.



Comenius in our school in Chorzow



We spent time with our guests both at school and we went out together. Our school prepared games and tasks for us but time after school was only for us and our new friends.

On the first day in the evening I collected Carolina (a Portuguese girl) from our school and I took her home for supper. My mum prepared typical Polish dishes: chicken soup for a starter and rolled meat with dumplings as a main course. Later I invited her to my room to get to know each other better. We watched a movie together, but after that we had to go to sleep because we were supposed to be early at school.

We spent our evenings in many different ways. For example we went bowling, we visited one of Polish Comenius participants in Zabrze and there was a party in a club.



One day we were in our theatre and we watched a performance prepared by our students. It was a drama by William Shakespeare entitled 'The Merchant of Venice'.



I think we all made new friends. We hope to meet again. We had fun together and it was an unforgettable experience.

Thank you to host students and their Families:
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"The Creative Calendar"

The following pages are taken from our book, which was compiled by students at the school in Chiavenna.



Tsiknopemptie

The word derives from tsikna= the smell of the burning meat and Pemptie= Thursday, a day of joy and preparation for the Holy Easter. It's customary to eat meat on this day as it's totally forbidden for the next 40 days.



25TH OF MARCH

NATIONAL DAY

On this day we commemorate with parades and events the Greek warriors who started in 1821 the revolution against the Ottoman Occupation. It's also a religious celebration for the Annunciation of the Holy Mother.



School Day

We use this day to celebrate our school in general: the amazing environment we live in, the teachers, the students, all of the employees. We usually don't attend classes in this day, since we have so many activities to participate in. School day happens every year on February 1st, because that is the day the women whose name was given to the school was born. We have many activities happening in this day, including a play, produced and acted by students, dancing numbers, singing numbers and sports competitions.



The lectures Day

Throughout the school year, several lectures are given at our school, whose main aim is to inform, in more detail, students about a certain subject. In a near future, the "Biodiversity/Evolution" lecture is scheduled, but there isn't an exact date yet. Nevertheless, the "Noble Room" (where normally lectures and conferences occur) has already been seen with some informal discussions about "Causes of Human Infertility" and "Contraceptive Methods", this year.



Republic Day

On the republic day
italian people
celebrate the born of
the italian republic
with parades and
speaking.



4: THE LAST SCHOOL DAY

ITALY

THE LAST SCHOOL DAY ALL
STUDENTS HAVE A PARTY WITH
THEIR TEACHERS TO CELEBRATE
THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.



THIS DAY THE STUDENTS WHO
ARE GOING TO BE GRADUATED
COME TO SCHOOL MASKED!!!

Penkkarit

Senior students' last school day. The day begins with the 'Abi Gaala' which is held by the 2nd year students. The seniors are given diplomas (... of the Year) and they e.g. participate in quizzes. After the 'Gaala', the seniors push their teachers, in their chairs, to the cafeteria to have coffee and cake and the teachers sing a farewell song to the seniors. Then starts the 'AbiShow': the seniors make the teachers perform plays and celebrate their (the students') last official school day. During the 'Show' the 3rd year students give each teacher a small remembrance. After this, the 2nd year students carry the seniors out of school and onto trucks, in which they go around the schools in the area to throw candy and dance. The seniors are dressed in costumes the whole day. There is also a fresco of the 3rd year students and the teachers. This year's theme is 'Alice in Wonderland'.



Independence Day

We celebrate the independence of Finland and visit the The Grave of the soldiers who died during the 2nd WW. Some students also graduate, if they have passed the matriculation exams during the autumn.



The School Concert

Every year before Christmas we enjoy the traditional School Concert at our school. Then our school bands and choirs show their best. In November 2011 for example MMM (one of our school bands), Staccato and the senior classes choir performed their songs. Even the teachers' choir presented some songs. After the performance they usually get lots of positive and enthusiastic comments from the audience.



Abisturm

Every year, at the end of the second half term in June, you will be able to see the Abisturm at Stenner Gymnasium. Students of the last grade who have written their last Abitur exams, celebrate the last days at school. The Abitur is a diploma from German secondary schools which qualifies you to study at a university. Every year the "Abisturm" (Abitur storm) is as individual as the people who organize it. For the younger students the day begins like any other school day. After some lessons the students of the last grade get all the students out of their classes. The fun begins: You can listen to music and sweets are thrown to them on the school yard. Usually the school leavers motivate the younger students to do crazy things like a bobby car race between teachers and students.



Third Grade Student's Day

Every year in our high school we have one day, when the roles change and students take control over school. The Leader of the Youth Council becomes the Headmaster and he gets the school keys, and some students become the teachers for a few hours and run the lessons. The rest of the final grade students have a lot of fun, dressing up, decorating the school with unusual and funny decorations, preparing some surprises for younger students and funny games or lessons for teachers. You may never be sure what can happen to you during this day or who you can meet.

At the end of this day a team of third grade students compete with the teachers team during the volleyball match which is attended by cheering crowds of younger students. Usually this day is followed by „studniowka” ball.



National Education Day

National Education Day is a Polish Holiday of Education celebrated on 14 October. This is an opportunity to reward the best teachers in Poland with a gold, silver and bronze medal of merit. It is also the day when we celebrate the creation of Commission of National Education which dates back to 1773.



School Encyclopaedia

The School Encyclopaedia was compiled by the school in Suonenjoki (Finland).

Auditorium

FI: JUHLASALI

There morning assemblies and other meetings take place.

GER: AULA

This is a nice place with a stage. It's mainly used for 1. school concerts, 2. school theatre performances, 3. written examinations.

GR: AMFITHEATRO (αμφιθέατρο)

Amphitheatre. It is a spacious place where concerts and all festive events are held.

IT: AULA MAGNA

POR: SALÃO NOBRE

A big space, theatre-like, with a stage and many comfortable chairs, perfect for presentations, meetings, theater plays, conferences and other types of big events.

PL: AULA

A big room with a lot of chairs and a stage, where both theatre performances and lectures take place. There is an overhead projector and a screen perfect for any presentations.

Autumn Holidays

FI: SYYSLOMA

One week's holiday, usually during the week 42

GER: HERBSTFERIEN

There are 2 weeks, generally in October. In the past they were called "potato holidays", as children had to help their parents in the garden or on farms. Some students do some job in the holidays to earn some extra money.

GR: We don't have them.

IT: There is no autumn holiday in Italy

POR: We don't have them.

PL: There is no autumn holiday in Poland. ☹️ But we have two-week winter holidays in January or February 😊

Block of examinations paper

FI: KOEPAPERI

In Suonenjoki students bring answering sheets themselves only in matriculation exams papers

are given by school and they are stamped by school secretary

GER: KLAUSURBÖGEN

In each quarter of a school year we have a phase of about 4 weeks in which we write our exam papers. Usually we use our own paper. Only in the final exam we get school paper.

GR: KOLA ANAFORAS (κόλλα αναφοράς)

A signed-and-sealed piece of paper which proves in writing the Ss' progress.

IT: TESTI DELLE PROVE D'ESAME

POR: FOLHA DE TESTE

A special sheet of paper whose aim is to write down the answers to a test's question.

PL: KARTA ODPOWIEDZI

A sheet of paper where you can mark the answers to the test's questions esp. used in the exams.

Books

FI: KOULUKIRJA

Students have to buy their own school books themselves. School books are free only in compulsory school

GER: Bücher

We use lots of them. Parents have to buy new books for about 25 EUR every school year. The rest can be borrowed from our school. In upper secondary level(...) teachers do a lot of photocopying for us. Lessons often start with teachers handing out photocopied material to us.

GR: VIVLIO (βιβλίο)

School books are provided by the Ministry of Education free of charge.

IT: LIBRO

POR: MANUAL ESCOLAR

Students' books adopted for a legal period of 6 years – translation – manual escolar

PL: Students have to buy their books.

Breaks

FI: VÄLITUNTI

After each lesson there is a break, which lasts ten to fifteen minutes.

GER: PAUSEN

Between 2 lessons there is a 5-minute break. After each block of 2 lessons there is a longer break of about 20 minutes. Lower secondary classes have about an hour's lunch break.

GR: DIALEMMA (διάλειμμα)

It lasts 5-10 min and follows each school hour; a 15-min-break for lunch.

IT: INTERVALLO

a short break that starts at 10.35 and ends at 10.45; during this break you can relax or eat snacks

POR: INTERVALOS

We have a 10 minutes break and one long 20' break between classes

PL: PRZERWA

A break between lessons when students spend their time in the corridors or in the Slovak Gardens. The most adorable moment during the school time. You can eat your sandwich or prepare for the next lessons. The shortest break lasts 5 minutes, the longest one 20 minutes.

Cafeteria / buffet

FI: RUOKALA, "KUKKURA"

Here is the free school lunch served for students.

GER: CAFETERIA

An important place for us. Here we can buy and have lunch, buy snacks, sth. to drink and / or just spend our free periods. There are also two taps from which we can tap - for free (sponsored by a local water company) - water into bottles, either fizzy water or still (soda) water.

GR: KILIKIO (κυλικείο)

It is a place where one can buy a limited number of snacks or drinks, the variety and quality of which is controlled by a special committee.

IT: We do not have a cafeteria at school. We only have vending machines

POR: REFEITÓRIO

It's a place that provides paid lunch for the students.

PL: SKLEPIK SZKOLNY

A small shop where students during breaks can buy sweets, sandwiches, cakes, beverages and even newspapers.

Chemistry Lab, class room

FI: MATEMAATTISTEN AINEIDEN LUOKKA.

A scientifically equipped class room in which Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics are taught.

GER: CHEMIERAUM

We have ONE Chemistry lab. They want to build a 2nd one in the future.

GR: CHEMIO (χημείο)

A scientifically equipped room in which chemistry, biology and geography are taught.

IT: AULA DI CHIMICA:

the room where chemistry and physics experiments are done. There is scientific equipment such as microscopes and a lot of books about science.

POR: LABORATORIO DE QUIMICA

A special room where Chemistry lessons take place.

PL: PRACOWNIA CHEMICZNA/FIZYCZNA

A classroom where physics and chemistry classes take place. There are test-tubes, and other equipment necessary for the experiments.

Class register, Teachers' workbook

FI: WILMA

An e-register in which teacher can note down lessons, homework, grades and absences. Wilma can be used as a communication venue between teachers and students and their guardians

GER: KLASSENBUCH

Teachers write into it for every lesson: 1. lesson topic; 2. homework; 3. absent student; 4. special remarks (if necessary).

GR: VIVLIO ILIS (βιβλίο ύλης)

It is a notebook in which teachers note down the material taught every school hour along with the HW assigned.

IT: REGISTRO DI CLASSE

a register where teachers mark and note the activities, homework, absences and conduct reports.

POR: For the first there is a definition there with the translation – LIVRO DE PONTO; for the second – a book for teachers only, to help with the book management the term is LIVRO DO PROFESSOR.

PL: DZIENNIK

A book where teachers mark the students' absences, grades, activities, topics of the lessons etc. This school year we don't have it in paper for anymore, it was replaced by a e-register.

Class representatives / form student

FI: LUOTTAMUSOPPILAS

A student elected by other class' students that represents class if necessary and also help teachers.

GER: secondary I: KLASSENSPRECHER (mal) / KLASSENSPRECHERIN (female); secondary II: KURSSPRECHER/IN

Students elect a representative and a deputy at the beginning of the school year for one school year.

GR: MATHETEKO SIMVOULEO (μαθητικό συμβούλιο)

Every year 5 students from each class are elected by Ss to act as their representatives for every issue that concerns them.

IT: RAPPRESENTANTI DI CLASSE

There are 2 students in every class that are elected by the rest of the class. These two students take part in the meetings with teachers and they relate the problems the class has.

POR: DELEGADO DE TURMA

A student who is elected at the beginning of the year as a class representative, who must be ready to help classmates and be a link between students and teachers

PL: PRZEWODNICZĄCY KLASY

A student elected at the beginning of the school year who is a class representative. His or her duties include informing the classmates about the school events, reminding about any payments, talking with teachers etc.

PL: TRÓJKA KLASOWA

A group of three students that are elected by the class. They are the representatives who take part in every important school event and who inform the classmates about the news. There is always a class president, a vice-class president and a treasurer.

Classroom

FI: LUOKKAHUONE

a room where the lessons are given. Class room includes desks, smartboard, teachers desk and teachers' computers.

GER: KLASSENRAUM

In the lower sec. level forms have their own class room. We, from the upper sec. level, go for lessons to rooms that are free; moreover we have a complete building ("Building 2") only for our les-

sons. We have dedicated some 16 rooms to 16 European countries, i.e. on the back wall there are typical words of the 'partner' country, a map etc.

GR: ETHOUSA (Αίθουσα)

A room in school in which a class meets for the lesson. There is one desk for every two students, a board, a teacher's desk and the necessary equipment.

IT: CLASSE

The room where lessons take place. There are desks for students, the teacher's desk and a blackboard

POR: SALA DE AULA

The room where classes are held in. There is one desk per student, an interactive board, a big desk for the teacher and chair for everyone.

PL: SALA LEKCYJNA

A room where all the lessons take place. There are desks for students, a teacher's desk, a blackboard and many different pictures, posters etc.

Computer lab

FI: ATK-luokka

In our school we don't have actual classroom for computer science, but we have movable computer cabins that teachers can bring to any class room when computers are needed

GER: COMPUTERRAUM

We have 2 bigger computer rooms for about 25 students and a smaller one (for about 10 students).

GR: ETHOUSA EPOLOGISTON (αίθουσα υπολογιστών)

Two rooms equipped with computers used for computer lessons.

IT: AULA DI INFORMATICA

A room with computers where students practice their computer skills.

POR: SALAS DE INFORMÁTICA

7 rooms fully equipped with computers for the whole class

PL: PRACOWNIA KOMPUTEROWA

A room with a lot of computers where information technology lessons take place.

Diagnostic test

FI: we don't have any official diagnostic tests. In some subjects, like languages, teachers may test first year students' starting level in the beginning of school year.

GER: DIAGNOSE-TEST

We don't usually have a diagnostic test. However, our central examinations in year 8, 10 and 12 can be used by teachers to diagnose the effect of lessons. Perhaps for individual students, but not for the majority.

GR: DIAGNOSTIKO TEST (Διαγνωστικό τεστ)

In the beginning of the school year all first-year-Ss write an English test so that their language competence be assessed.

IT: TEST D'INGRESSO.

A test which is administered at the beginning of the school-year in order to identify weaknesses in the students' preparation

POR: TESTE DIAGNÓSTICO

The first test of the year, which is only for the teachers to check how much (or little) the students know. It doesn't count for evaluation

PL: TEST DIAGNOSTYCZNY

A test prepared by the teachers at the beginning of the school year, which should inform about the students' knowledge. It's useful for teachers to adapt the lessons for the students 'level'.

Form Teacher

FI: RYHMÄNOHJAAJA

Each class has a special teacher who is responsible of following students' progress and informing class on important matters and organising class activities

GER: KLASSENLEHRER

Every lower secondary level class have their own form teacher, who have a special contact to 'their' form. In the upper sec. level there is one tutor for one student year.

GR: ΙΠΕΦΘΗΝΟΣ ΚΑΘΗΓΗΤΗΣ (υπεύθυνος καθηγητής)

An assigned teacher for each class, responsible for all issues regarding Ss, parents and all relative paperwork.

IT: COORDINATORE DI CLASSE

He/she coordinates the meetings with representatives of students and relatives

POR: DIRECTOR DE TURMA

The teacher responsible for keeping the contact with the teachers, the students and the students' family

PL: WYCHOWAWCA KLASY

A teacher taking care of his/her class, meeting with parents, organizing trips, solving any problems in the class etc.

Headmaster

FI: REHTORI

The head of the school who organizes the daily work.

GER: SCHULLEITER

The headmaster and his deputy are responsible for major decisions regarding school life and learning.

GR: ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΤΗΣ (Διευθυντής)

The headmaster / headmistress, a teacher with heavy administrative duties, responsible for the well-being of the school community.

IT: DIRIGENTE SCOLASTICO

He/She is the head of the school. We often share the headmasters with another school in the area.

POR: DIRECTOR

The headmaster, the teacher who is responsible for everything.

PL: DYREKTOR

A headmaster, the most important person in the school responsible for almost everything.

Language Lab

FI: KIELILUOKKA

Classes were Swedish, German, English, French and Russian are taught. In language lab there is wireless headphones for each student.

GER: SPRACHLABOR

We had language labs in the past, but they were given up, because the effect was in no relation to the costs. However, in our classrooms we have CD recorders; and there is the possibility to watch (and analyse) films in our classrooms.

GR: ΕΘΟΥΣΑ ΚΣΕΝΟΝ ΓΛΩΣΣΟΝ (αίθουσα ξένων γλωσσών)

In that classroom we study foreign languages with the help of various teaching aids.

IT: AULA DI LINGUE

A room where students practice foreign languages, especially listening. There are stations

with headphones through which you can do listening exercises or tests, but also speak and record your voice to improve your pronunciation.

POR: We don't have one.

PL: PRACOWNIA JĘZYKOWA

A classroom where foreign language lessons take place. On the shelves you can find a lot of dictionaries, on the walls posters explaining e.g. grammar rules. There is also always a CD-player necessary for listening exercises. Some of these classes have a whiteboard and an overhead projector.

Lesson

FI: OPPITUNTI

It lasts for 75 minutes and there can be maximum five of them every day.

GER: (UNTERRICHTS-) STUNDE

Although the German word "Stunde" means hour (of 60 minutes), the majority of schools have 45-minute lessons. Our lessons last 45 minutes, too. Our first 4 lessons are usually combined to two 90-minute unit to intensify our work.

GR: MATHEMA (μάθημα)

It lasts for 45 min followed by a break. 8 to 9 subjects daily.

IT: LEZIONI

We go to school from Monday to Saturday. We have 5 lessons a day from 7.50 until 12.30. On Tuesday or Thursday most of us have afternoon lessons too.

POR: Aula

Teaching class.

PL: LEKCJA

Time when students sit in the class, listen to teachers, write in the notebooks and learn. A class lasts 45 minutes.

Library

FI: KIRJASTO

School library is located in school lobby. Students can read and do research and loan books there.

GER: (SCHUL-)BÜCHEREI

Here you can find school books, general knowledge books, magazines. The selection of books and other media is rather limited, because we have the municipal library nearby.

GR: ΒΙΒΛΙΟΘΗΚΗ (βιβλιοθήκη)

There are stored a lot of all kinds of books, dictionaries, encyclopedias and DVDs which Ss can borrow

IT: BIBLIOTECA:

The library, a room where there are a lot of books about every subject.

POR: BIBLIOTECA

A beautiful, large room where students can study and research; also some conferences can take place here.

PL: BIBLIOTEKA

A room with computers and thousands of books. If you have terrible homework to do, hunger for knowledge or you just want to read something – that is an ideal place for you. As in other libraries, you can borrow books here and read them at home.

Lockers

FI: KAAPIT

Student can get personal lockers, in which they can keep personal items during school days. lockers have combination locks and students can personalize the combination

GER: SCHLIEßFÄCHER

Students can rent a locker for 20 EUR per school year.

GR: We don't have any lockers.

IT: We do not have any lockers at our school

POR: CACIFOS

Grey metal cabinets where students leave their stuff, such as school books. For the lockers we have to pay 10€ in the beginning of the year. Most of people share lockers.

PL: SZAFKI

High, narrow, metal cabinets where students can leave their jackets, shoes, books or whatever they want. Since losing keys to the lockers is quite common, that's a source of weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Marks

FI: ARVOSANAT

Grades are from 4 to 10. 4 means not passed the lowest passed grade is 5 and the best 10.

GER: NOTEN / ZENSUREN / PUNKTE

In the lower secondary level they have 6 grades, from 1+ (the very best) to 6 (the worst. Teachers

differentiate between 1+, 1, 1-, 2+, 2, 2-, 3+, 3, 3-, 4+, 4, 4-, 5+, 5, 5-, 6. The last (5+, 5, 5-, 6) are real danger zones ('not passed'). In the upper secondary level we have the same grades, but they're counted as 'points', from 15 (the best) to 0; here 4 points mark a deficit ('not passed')

GR: VATHME (Βαθμοί)

They go from 1-20, the pass being 10.

IT:VOTI

The marks the students get. They go from 1 to 10; 1 is the worst mark and 10 is the best. You pass when you get at least 6.

POR: NOTAS

Grades from 0 to 20, being 0 the minimum, 20 the maximum.

PL: OCENY

Marks the students get during the school year. They go from 1 to 6 and 1 is the worst one. 6 is reserved just for extraordinary activities and knowledge

Notice boards

FI: INFO TV

52 inch TV sets are used for informing students on important events in school e.g. school menu

GER: INFO(RMATIONS)BRETTER

A place in our break hall; it contains the latest news for the upper sec. years.

GR: PINAKAS ANAKINOSEON (πίνακας ανακοινώσεων)

It is a board on which important events, news or changes are pinned in order for the Ts and Ss to be informed.

IT: BaCHECA

There is a notice board for teachers and one for students. Students usually use it to sell and buy second hand books

POR: PLACARD

In our school we have a lot of board where teachers put works, bulletins, etc.

PL: We have them on the walls of our school.

Oral test

FI: SUULLINEN KOE.

Mainly in languages used oral test

GER: MÜNDLICHE PRÜFUNG

Up to now students only had oral tests in the "Abitur", i.g. the final exams. From 2014/15 there

will be an oral in year 9 and an oral in year 11 or 12 to replace one written examination in foreign languages.

GR: It happens when the student gets suspended in June and has to be examined again in September, along with a written test. Also, when it is recommended by a special committee for students with learning disabilities.

IT:INTERROGAZIONE

The teacher gives an oral test.

POR: TESTE ORAL

It happens when the teacher asks us for definitions orally.

PL: PYTANIE

A type of examination when student have to answer the questions orally. For many students it is very stressful.

Parent-teacher meetings

FI: VANHEMPAINILTA

A special meeting held once a year for students' guardians. Guardians are informed during the meeting of all the important matters concerning students during that school year.

GER: ELTERNSPRECHTAG

We have 4 parent (half) days in every school year. Then parents, and also (older) students, can talk to teachers about problems, grades, targets and whatever is relevant to them.

GR: MERA GONEON (Μέρα Γονέων)

Specific day of the month during which the Parents can meet the Ts for any issue concerning the Ss.

IT: COLLOQUI SCUOLA-FAMIGLIA

During the whole year the students' parents can meet the teachers once a week to talk about their progress and to give and get any possible advice.

POR: REUNIÃO DE PAIS

A meeting between the teacher and the students' relatives.

PL: ZEBRANIE

A meeting with parents organized by a teacher. It takes place every two months. During this event the parents talk with a teacher about the class's problems, the trips and marks.

School council

FI: KOULUN JOHTOKUNTA

Our school doesn't have school council anymore. Parents can influence school's work through unofficial parental association.

GER: SCHULKONFERENZ

The highest committee at our school, consisting of 6 teachers, 6 parents and 6 students. Every person as the equal right to vote.

GR: DEKAPENTAMELES (δεκαπενταμελής)

15 Ss elected by the whole school to act as a bridge with the administration.

IT: CONSIGLIO D'ISTITUTO

The headmaster, representatives of teachers, relatives, students and administrative staff, set up the school council. They meet 5/6 times a year to discuss school matters

PL: RADA RODZICÓW

A parents' council that make a lot of key decisions considering school

School lunch

FI: KOULURUOKAILU

Free for every student. Between 10.30 am and 12.00am.

GER: MITTAGESSEN

Especially many younger students and some teachers can have lunch in the school canteen. Usually you have to book your meal online a week ahead. At the moment a basic lunch is 3.50 EUR.

GR: MESIMERIANO FAGETO (μεσημεριανό φαγητό)

Available for Music School Ss only since their timetable lasts longer.

IT: We do not have a school canteen. Most of the students go back home for lunch.

POR: ALMOÇO

Break between end of the morning 13.15pm and beginning of afternoon – 14.15.

PL: SCHOOL LUNCH

Well, actually we do not have one. However, most of students bring some food from their houses (e.g. a sandwich, yoghurt, or a salad) and eat it during the long break.

School year

FI: KOULUVUOSI

Starts in week 33 and ends in week 22. It lasts for 190 school days and includes five periods.

GER: SCHULJAHR

Our school year is divided into 2 terms. At the end of every term you get a school report. The summer school report decides whether you have passed or failed the year (in this case students may have the chance to have a re-exam, or they have to repeat the whole school year.)

GR: SCHOLIKI CHRONIA (σχολική χρονιά)

The school year begins on 12th September and ends mid-June for the Ss of 30th for Ts.

IT: ANNO SCOLASTICO

It starts at the beginning of September and it ends at the beginning of June

POR: ANO ESCOLAR

The school year takes place between September and June.

PL: ROK SZKOLNY

It starts on 1st of September and finishes on the last day of June.

School yard

FI: KOULUPIHA

Outdoor space, where students can hang out during breaks

GER: SCHULHOF

Our school yard has actually 3 school yards around the main buildings. There students can play or chill out during break times. There are a small caged football pitch and a playground, too.

GR: PROAVLIO (προαύλιο)

It is an open area within the school limits where students spend their time between breaks when the weather is good; also where the basketball and volleyball courts are situated.

IT: CORTILE

The schoolyard. Students can spend their breaks there.

POR: PÁTIO

An outdoor space in the school, where the students stay if they don't go out of school during the breaks.

PL: SLOWAK GARDENS

(Słowak is a popular name for our school) – External part of our school. Actually that's not a real garden but rather a charming piece of grass. A football pitch and a table for table tennis are located there. There are also some benches on which girls can admire boys playing.

Secretariat, office

FI: KANSLIA

The School secretary's office.

GER: SEKRETARIAT

The school secretaries do various work, from paper work to comforting unhappy or ill pupils.

GR: GRAMMATEA (γραμματεία)

The offices where the school secretaries take care of all the paperwork

IT: SEGRETERIA

where the headmaster and secretaries work. When you need assistance you go there.

POR: SECRETARIA

Where all the paperwork and bureaucracy takes place.

PL: SEKRETARIAT

That's a room where office workers work. It's full of important documents. You must pass it if you want to get to the headmaster's office.

Summer holiday

FI: KESÄLOMA

The longest holiday lasting ten whole weeks, starts Saturday of the week 22 and ends in the middle of August.

GER: SOMMERFERIEN

Are 6 weeks short. They are at the end and absolute highlight of a school year.

GR: KALOKAIRINES DIAKOPES (Καλοκαιρινές διακοπές)

From mid June to 12th Sep for Ss, and July/August for Ts who in turns have to keep the school open every Thursday all summer long.

IT: VACANZE ESTIVE

We have long summer holidays (3 months)

POR: The end of the third term marks the beginning of summer holidays, the most wished, that usually start in the middle of June.

PL: WAKACJE LETNIE

Summer holidays lasts about two months: from last Saturday of June to last Sunday of August. It's time for travelling, relaxing or doing nothing.

Staff room

FI: OPETTAJAINHUONE

It's the room where the teachers spend their breaks and do some of their preparations.

GER: LEHRERZIMMER

There teachers spend their time and prepare lessons. Students aren't usually allowed to enter.

GR: GRAFIO KATHIGETON (γραφείο καθηγητών)

It's the room where teachers have their desks and spend their free time.

IT: AULA INSEGNANTI

It's the room where teachers meet and keep their own things (books, registers...).

POR: SALA DE PROFESSORES

The room where all teachers meet during the breaks

PL: POKÓJ NAUCZYCIELSKI

A room where teachers can stay during breaks and can prepare for lessons.

Subjects

FI: KOULUAINE

it is possible to study 21 different subjects in Suonenjoki Upper Secondary School. A subject is divided into courses, usually some courses are compulsory, but if students want more information on certain subject he can study advanced courses that are voluntary.

GER: (UNTERRICHTS-)FÄCHER

Generally speaking we have mainly the following subject areas: languages (German; English, French, Latin, Spanish), Maths, sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physics), social sciences (Pedagogy, History, Social Sciences), Religious Education, Philosophy / Practical Philosophy, Physical Education

GR: MATHEMATATA (μαθήματα)

They vary from 11 to 16 for each class plus 7 of music lessons. All subjects are compulsory except for Religious Education.

IT: MATERIE

The subjects studied; the subjects vary from school to school.

POR: MATÉRIA

The subject is what we learn during the school year, it depends on the course we have chosen.

PL: PRZEDMIOTY SZKOLNE

The subjects that are studied at school e.g Biology, History, PE

Timetable

FI: LUKUJÄRJESTYS

It contains information about which subjects the student has where and when, also who is teaching. There are max. five lessons per day. Every student can choose the courses they want to take in each period* and these form their weekly schedules. * (there are five periods)

STUNDENPLAN

Generally lower secondary students get a common 'form' specific timetable, upper secondary students get individual timetables, depending on their choice and combination of subjects and courses.

GR: OROLOGIO PROGRAMMA (ωρολόγιο πρόγραμμα)

It is the weekly schedule showing which Ts teach which classes; lessons last 45 min, 8-9 classes a day, 5 days a week, from 8.00 to 15.00

IT: ORARIO SCOLASTICO

the weekly lesson plan; there is the provisional timetable that is set for the first week of the scholastic year, and then the definitive one that is used every day. Some lessons last 60 minutes and others only 50. A school day consists in 5 hours and a break. We go to school from Monday to Saturday, the lessons start at 7.50 and end at 12.30 but some students also have to attend classes in the afternoon.

POR: HORÁRIO

Students' time for the curriculum subjects.

PL: PLAN LEKCJI

A timetable. That's a plan of the weekly lessons with the time of the breaks, starting and finishing

school etc. Lessons begin at 7.35 a.m. and finish at 3.05.p.m.

Trimester, Term

FI: LUKUKAUSI

School year was traditionally divided into two halves: Autumn and spring term. Nowadays in upper secondary school school year is divided to periods. In Suonenjoki we have 5 periods during a school year.

GER: We don't have trimester. The most important units are half-year terms; they are divided into 2 quarters each. At uni they're called "semester", but we just call them half-year ("Halbjahr").

GR: TREMENO (τρίμηνο)

One of the 3 periods for school lessons; Sep-Nov, Dec-Feb, Mar-May.

IT: QUADRIMESTRE

We have two terms, from the beginning of the school-year until the 25th of January and from the 26th of January until the end of the school-year

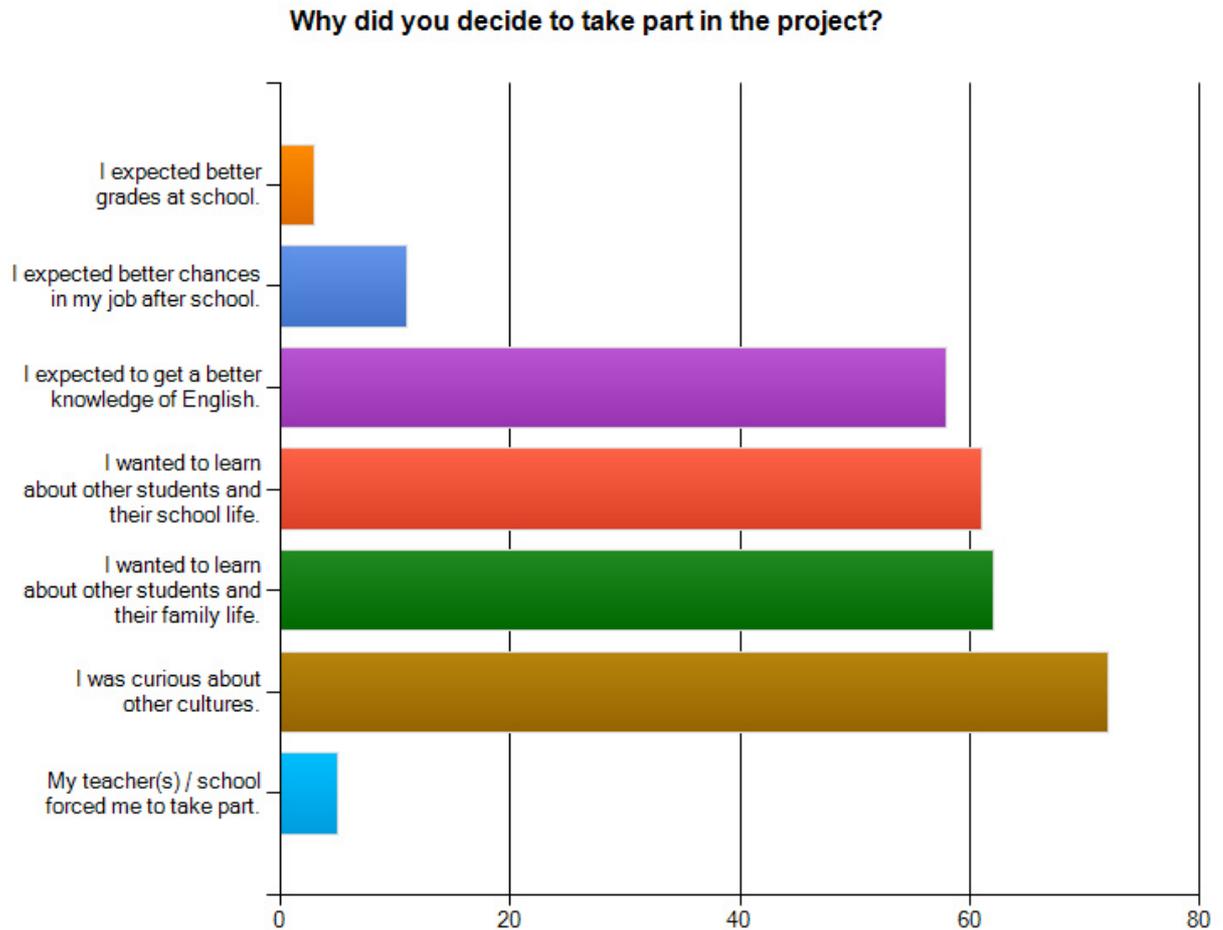
POR: TRIMESTRE

PL: Semester

It is a period of time in schools when you collect marks and at the end of it you get a final mark. There are two terms: first (September-January) and second (February-June). Between first and second term there are winter holidays and between second and first – summer holidays.

Students' Final Evaluation

The Final Evaluation of students was compiled by the school in Iserlohn (Germany).



I wanted to meet new people and to gain life experience.

i wanted to meet new people

I think it would be an important way of learning english and be with other students from other schools

I wanted to travel around Europe myself and by the knowledge the program could offer me!

To meet other people, exchange opinions, socialise, build the skill of confidence, creativity and cooperation.

i also wanted to travel abroad

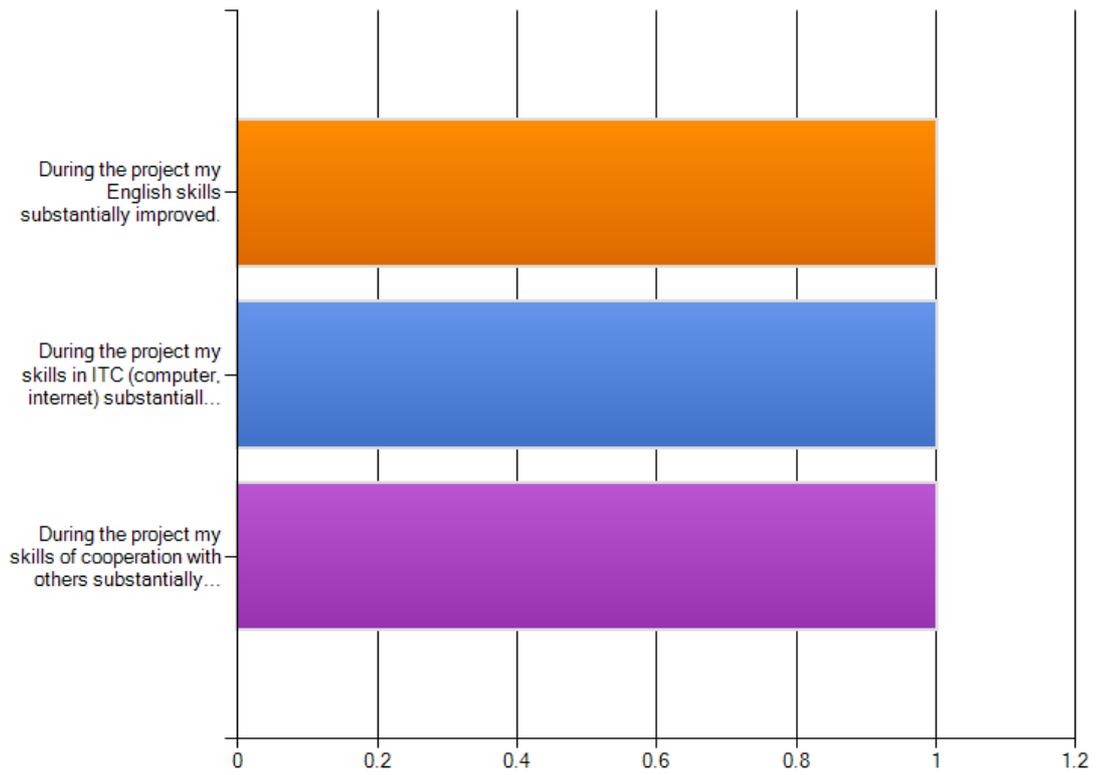
For me it was something more like communicating with teenagers from other countries, learn about the interests and finally realise that all those cultural differences didnt force us from forming great friendships

I wanted to meet new friends from other countries.

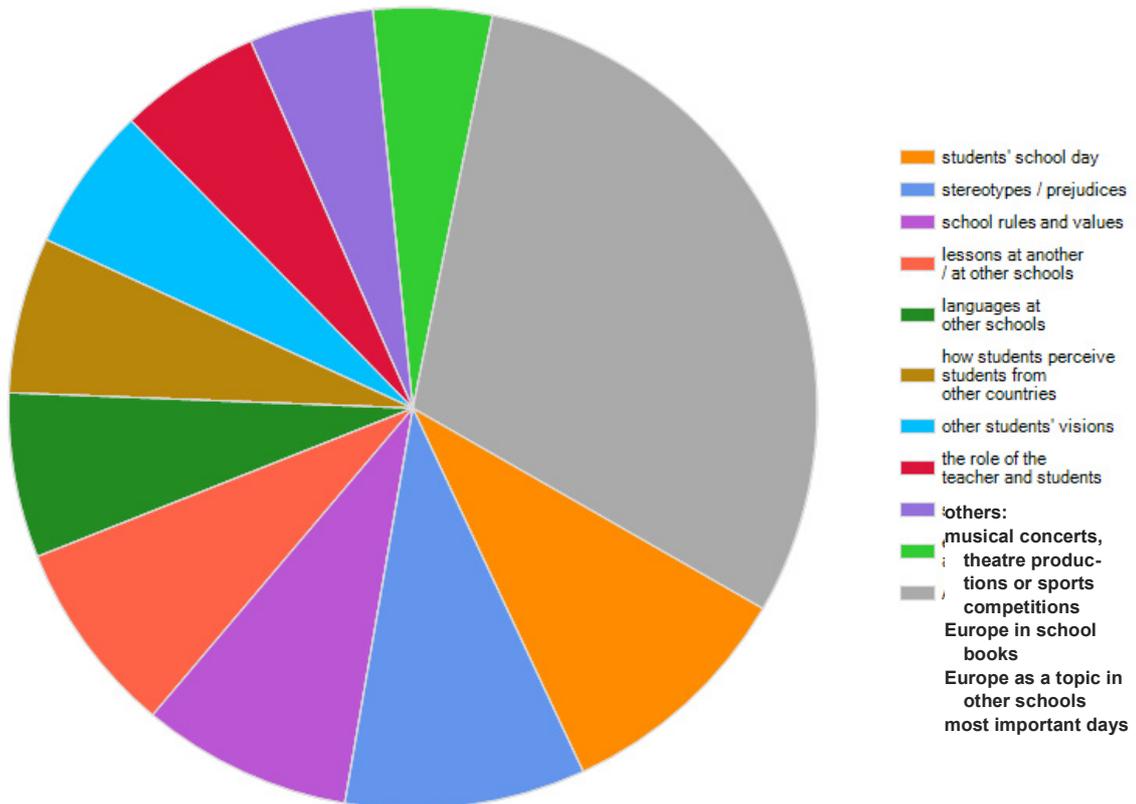
I liked the journies we would make.

I wanted to meet new people from other European countries.

What skills have you developed?



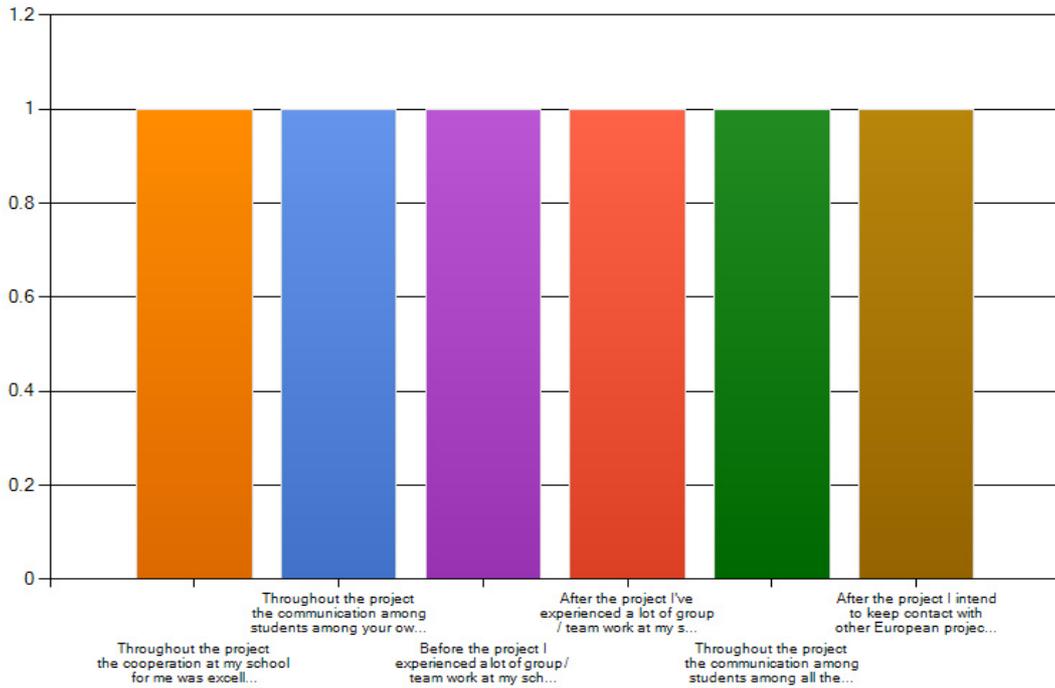
During the project I learned quite a lot about



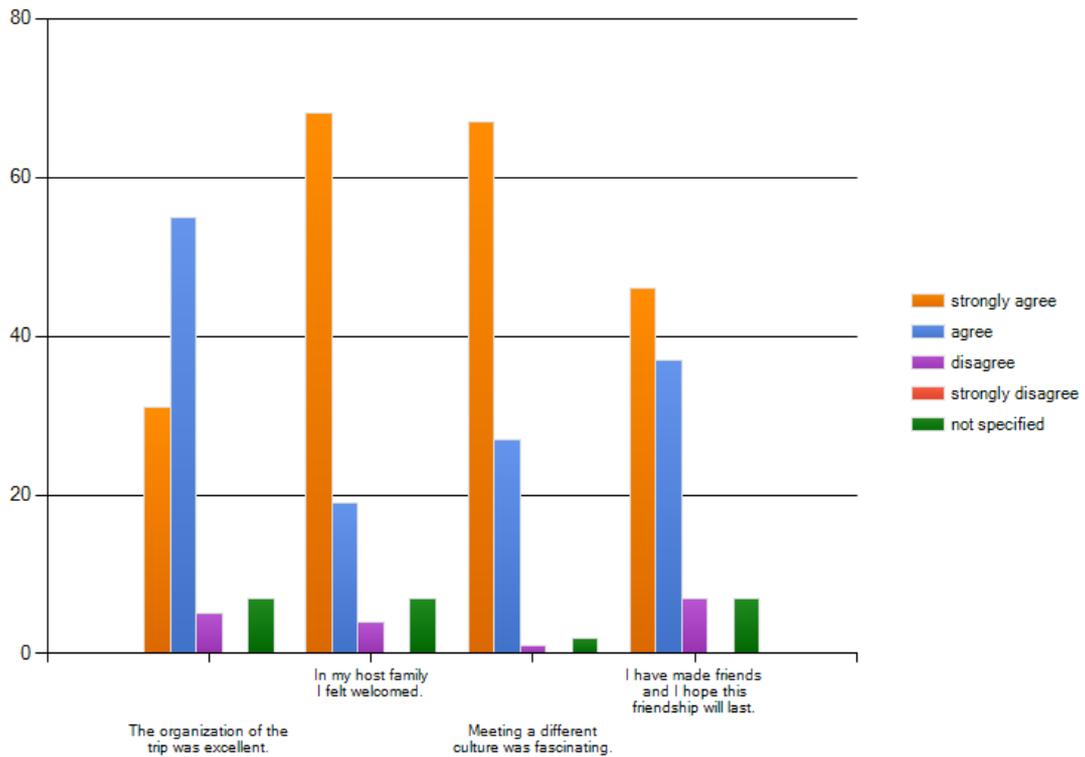
Statements about cooperation and communications.

	strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree	not specified
Before the project I experienced a lot of group / team work at my school.	8,0% (8)	46,0% (46)	36,0% (36)	3,0% (3)	7,0% (7)
After the project I've experienced a lot of group / team work at my school.	13,9% (14)	54,5% (55)	22,8% (23)	3,0% (3)	5,9% (6)
Throughout the project the communication among students among all the schools was excellent.	16,7% (17)	52,9% (54)	21,6% (22)	0,0% (0)	8,8% (9)
After the project I intend to keep contact with other European project students.	31,4% (32)	52,9% (54)	11,8% (12)	0,0% (0)	3,9% (4)
Throughout the project the cooperation at my school for me was excellent.	12,7% (13)	48,0% (49)	27,5% (28)	4,9% (5)	6,9% (7)
Throughout the project the communication among students among your own school was excellent	14,9% (15)	56,4% (57)	21,8% (22)	1,0% (1)	5,9% (6)

Statements about cooperation and communications.



Visit at the other school(s)

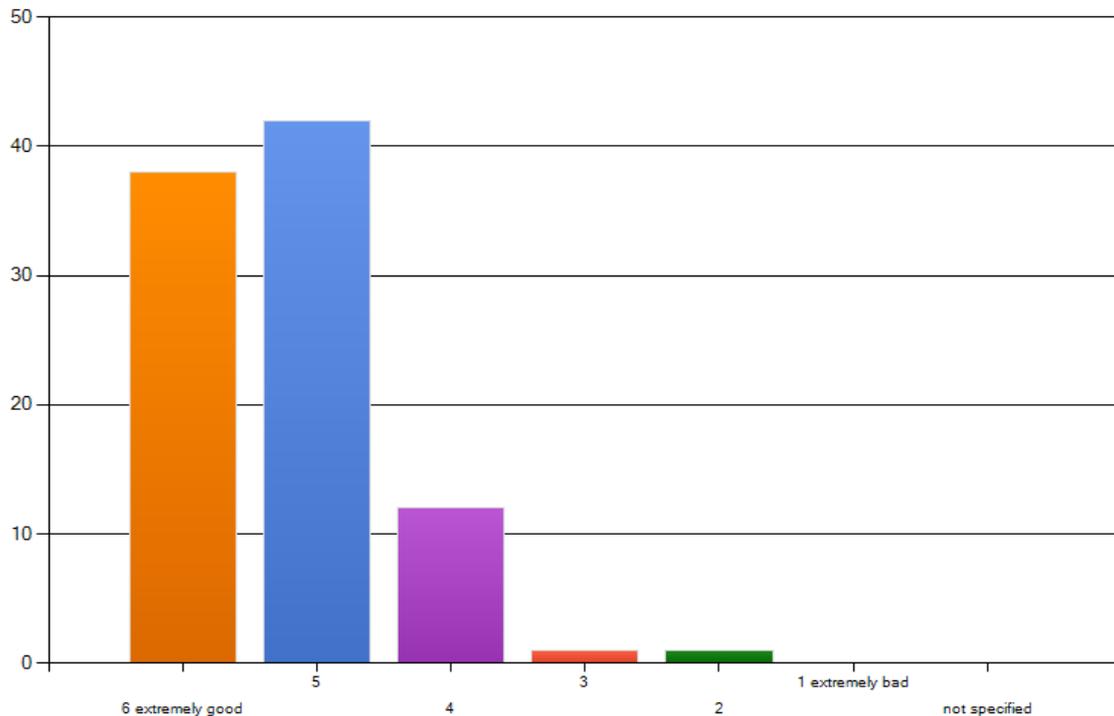


I can't measure all the good moments my hosts (from Greece) gave me. I'm so thankful to them for giving one of the best times of my life.

I fell in love with an Italian boy and he's now my boyfriend.

The time of the mobility was spent nicely and actually nothing was wrong in the case of the excursions :)

For me the Comenius project was



I want more of it. Like just one last time!

FANTASTIC!!

Thank you for the best experience I had these years in school !!!

You don't have to ask me ... ask students that didn't participate ... From what they heard about us I'm sure they will have the same opinion

an experience that i will remember forever

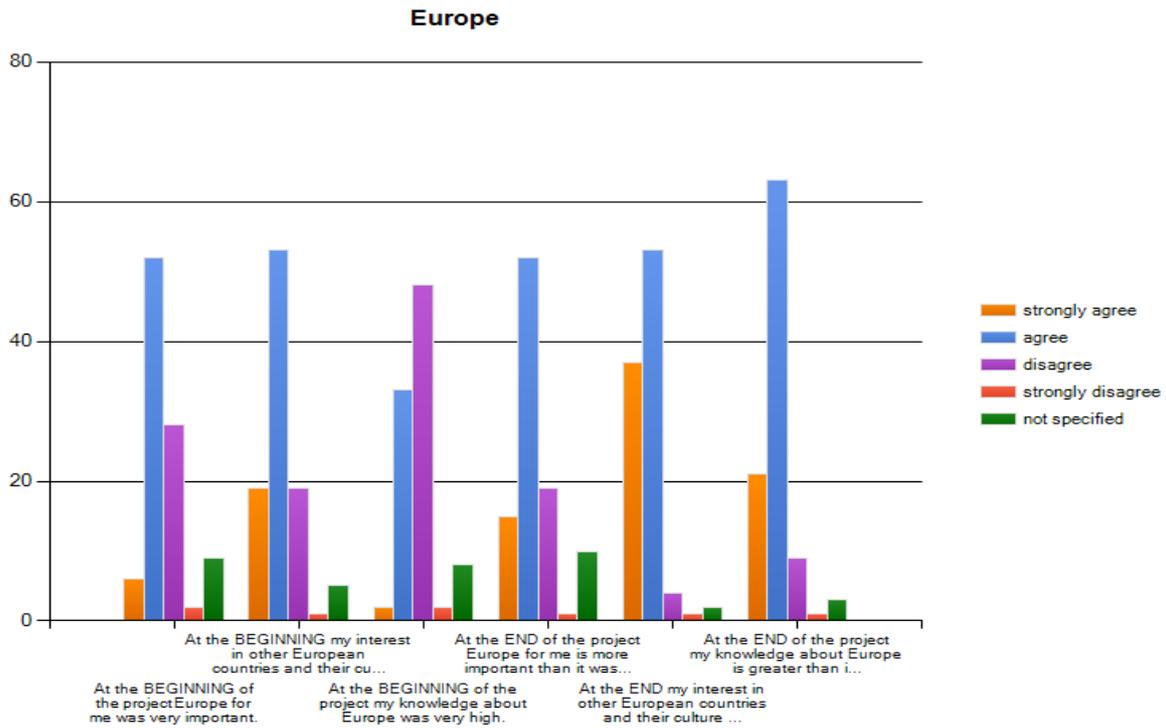
Quite a good new experience :)

(...) all in all the project was sooo good for me, because I could improve my English and got so much new experiences about all the different countries!!!! Well done :)

The guest family was very nice and the food was delicious

Interesting project with many possibilities.

I'd like my school to take part in such project again because for us, students it's something extraordinary. I am not able to tell you how glad i am that I could take part in it. The biggest advantage is that Comenius project gave us a big opportunity to meet so many students from other countries, and it's not like a normal acquaintanceship, because when we're somewhere on holidays we meet some people, but sooner or later we lose contact, but here it's something totally different - I think that even one year later we still would like to meet all together and we will try to do our best to do it finally.



My suggestions for another Comenius project:

Simply the best

I can not imagine...!!! Could another Comenius be better than this one????!!!:-)

I do not care how, I want it to happen. Its like i said before JUST ONE LAST TIME (in this case in Germany)

I would really like it to take part in another Comenius project once again!

Overall organization

Another Comenius project would be something that all of the participants would love to experience again. But willingness and the right mood for hard work are strongly essential.

My suggestion for the next Comenius project is that there should be more members.

Maybe we should just work harder on the organization of the mobilities at school - just to avoid stressful situations.

We should add more countries to improve this small project to a manifold great experience that everybody who has the chance to participate in it should do it.

It must be better organized, because our topics were not ready at the time it should be ready and it was hard to look for what we have to do now, and what others do, and if they do the "same" quality etc.

Visits and programme during visits

More trips.
more trips
longer trips

Please make the trips last longer ... !!!!!

Trips should be longer to spend much more time all together

I think that trips should be longer
The trips could be longer and the group work should deal with political themes too.
More days in trip and some work must be more interesting
More trip and longer than now
More days in host country!
More days for the visit
More days for the visit to other countries and better communication in our school.

How to work during a visit

Make more projects in each small groups.
more group work
Spend more time together. Never separate hosts from their guests for trips (like: guest is going with another guests but his / her host stay because there's not enough place / money to send him for the trip too) - unfortunately I experienced it and I felt not comfortable then ...
Make people from different countries cooperate on a forum towards the group works
less activities, more meetings
Maybe not to discuss too long because after 20 minutes no-one is hearing to teacher anymore
Give young people more time to be together :)

Topics

other topics. our topics were very similar
I would like to suggest that there are more surveys that will attract all ages and also that the themes involved are more related to modern reality we all live nowadays.

Organisation

People are the most important part of the project. Let us not forget about each among organisation and other crucial issues
sometimes a better organization
I think the Idea of Comenius is very good! But it would be more likable if there are only families who really enjoy having guests and be participant of such a project. There would be less pupils scared or frightened of their

More nations involved in the project - possibility to choose the mobility on which how can go
Stay more days in the host countries
More days on a trip
More frequent and longer trips
The mobilities should be a little bit longer, because just 5 days are not enough to get to know the others.

Well, to start with I'd like to say that I don't find interesting the topics related to the politics. From time to time during the presentations there were some complaints about the political system which made me rather confused than informed. Finally, (sorry for that!) but it is necessary to improve the level of English while speaking, because it's sometimes extremely difficult to understand everything properly :)

Not so many activities during trips to other countries, so everyone has more time in their host family - keep contact with other Comenius-classes from other countries also when there is no trip at the time

Teenager's life in different countries ...
What are the things that connect European people.
more presentations about the European countries in generally

guest families and the feeling of community and being welcome would be bigger. :) -> (Shouldn't mean, that my guest family wasn't nice. They were awesome!)
the journeys should be more planed and organized

"If we examine ourselves,
we see that our faculties grow in such a manner
that what goes before
paves the way for what comes after."

Amos Comenius (1592-1670)

The Comenius actions are part of the EU's Lifelong Learning Programme. They are meant to help young people and educational staff better understand the range of European cultures, languages and values.

In summer 2011 six European schools embarked on a Comenius adventure, which was to change everybody's lives.

This book contains reports, photos, statistics, students' voices and other materials that document this great experience.