



news from european classrooms

Project Coordinator's Message



Dear reader,

You are reading the first issue of the e-Newsletter of our Erasmus+ project: **Development and Implementation of Innovative Methods of Teaching Math, Science and Languages in the Multicultural European Classroom to Increase Student Literacy and Prevent Early School Leaving.** [2015-1-LV01-KA219-013422]

The reason why we have decided to participate in this project and have chosen the above-mentioned priorities, is that every day the staff of the schools deals with the issue of the integration of the children from the immigrants' and Roma families into the school community, as well as with the low achievers. Our project deals with a common problem: lack of motivation, low achievements and as a result early school leaving. While designing this project, we started with the question why it happens. Some students of our schools belong to families that have a disadvantaged status, being members of an ethnic group, and thus having more problems in integrating in our society. They are considered to be at risk of social exclusion, not only in our countries, but throughout Europe. These pupils need our support in order to be able to grow up as European citizens, aiming to be integrated wherever they go. To provide this support, we intend to develop new teaching tools, which facilitate students' motivation to learn, improve their basic and transversal skills and help disadvantaged students finish school successfully.

We hope that you, dear reader, will find the activities and outcomes of our project interesting and useful.

Ludmila Renge, Project Coordinator

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Aim and Objectives of the Project



Aim

- Exploration of teaching tools and social innovations that will support low achievers, immigrants and multiculturalism in the European classroom and prevent early school leaving.

Objectives

- To investigate the ethnic composition, students' learning success of partner schools in Portugal, Cyprus, Germany, Iceland, Croatia and Latvia and the problems/difficulties that lead immigrants, Roma and other low achievers to early school leaving.
- To develop, implement and share innovative methods of teaching.
- To encourage students to view language literacy as being useful to all citizens and thus enhance literacy and increase the number of students who acquire compulsory education successfully.
- To elaborate ICT learning and teaching tools: CD-ROMs with virtual excursions, GPRS maps, mobile phone applications for Math, Science and Language lessons.
- Through this project we hope to help students to finish school successfully, to enhance their motivation, tolerance and inter-cultural competences.
- To develop, test and implement innovative approaches in teaching Maths, Science and Foreign and schooling languages.

Important outcomes expected in this project include the availability of lesson plans and resources for other teachers and the increase of teachers' professional competences.

The pedagogical staff of participating schools intends to implement, improve the resources in their everyday practice, disseminate among the colleagues. We believe it is crucially important to work in that direction because it encourages improvement of personal, professional and social competences of all participants.

For presentations, photos and more, please visit: <http://erasmus.pdps.lv/>





LATVIA

School name: Rigas Paraugavas Pamatskola

Headteacher: Irena Shinkareva

Coordinator: Ludmila Renge



CROATIA

School name: Osnovna Skola Marjan

Headteacher: Zdenka Barović

Coordinator: Zvonimir Vuković



GERMANY

School name: Stadtische Adolf-Reichwein - Gesamtschule

Headteacher: Frank Bisterfeld

Coordinator: Ralph David



PORTUGAL

School name: Agrupamento De Escolas Gaia Nascente

Headteacher: Sergio Afonso

Coordinators: Maria Nair Fontes/Laura Castro Moreira



ICELAND

School name: Grunnskollinn a Isafirdi

Headteacher: Sveinfriour Veturloadottir

Coordinator: Halla Guðbjörg



CYPRUS

School name: Gymnasio Palouriotissas

Headteacher: David David

Coordinator: Marina Christodoulou

1st Meeting in Porto, Portugal, October 2015

Written by the German Team



The Escola Adriano Correia de Oliveira has about 800 students and employs about 70 teachers. Since 2013, it is part of a bigger group of schools called Grupamento de Escolas Gaia Nascente. It offers secondary level education up to class 10.

We had the opportunity to visit some classes and had a closer look at the school premises. The students do not wear uniforms and were curious who these visitors were. What struck was the hearty atmosphere at the school, especially in the impressive student-teacher-relationship, which seems to be characterized by mutual respect.



School tour



Our hosts

As this was the first of a series of six meetings, all the presentations had an introductory function. Each country presented itself briefly and then concentrated on its specific education system. All six participating schools were presented in PowerPoint, showing the wide variety of the schools taking part. The project covers all kinds of schools: those starting with class one (Croatia) and others finishing with class 13 (Germany).



During Meetings



During Meetings



The meeting in Porto lasted three days for work plus two days for travel.

On the 21st of October 2015 teambuilding activities and getting to know Porto was on the agenda. The teams from the different countries met for the first time, so there were many questions to be asked and things to talk about. Some countries already had experience with Comenius or Erasmus+ Programmes, other none at all. A bus tour of Porto including a boat trip on the river Duoro and some information on the art of port wine-making gave ample opportunity to get to know each other.

On the next day (22nd October) the teams were welcomed at the participating Portuguese school. The headmaster of Grupamento de Escolas Gaia Nascente, Sérgio Afonso, welcomed the visiting parties in the school library. The participants thanked him for his and his school's hospitality. Presents were handed over. Later we moved to the room of the European Club at Escola Adriano Correia de Oliveira, where most of the presentations (introduction to the participating countries and the respective school system) were given.

A guided tour of the school premises was met with great interest. We visited different lessons and rooms as well as the gym and the schoolyard, which was very interesting as lots of differences and similarities between this school in Portugal and the respective home schools were detected and discussed.

Lunch was offered in the restaurant of a nearby biological park, which also offered an interesting exhibition on evolution.

The afternoon was filled with the remaining presentations of school systems and participating schools.



In front of the famous bridge in Porto

PARTICIPANTS

Latvia

- Ludmila Renge
- Irena Shinkareva
- Tatjana Moisejeva

Portugal

- Maria Nair Fontes
- Laura Castro Moreira

Croatia

- Zdenka Barović
- Zvonimir Vuković

Cyprus

- David David
- Marina Christodoulou

Germany

- Ralph David
- Alessa Held

Iceland

- Halla Magnadóttir
- Bryndis Bjarnason

1st Meeting in Porto, Portugal, October 2015



Visiting Mayor in the impressive townhall



Afternoon coffee in a beautiful hotel location overlooking Vila Nova de Gaia and Porto.

The next day (23rd October) we saw the last presentations and started to discuss the further course of the project. The project coordinator Ludmilla Renge suggested a twofold project plan:

- Stocktaking: situation of immigrants in the participating countries and school, the academic success of students with migration background (these would be mainly the topics to be dealt with at the next meeting in Lüdenscheid, Germany, in March 2016).
- Possible solutions: innovative methods of teaching to increase student literacy and prevent early school leaving as employed in the different participating countries as possible solutions.

After these proceedings were agreed upon in detail, the group was welcomed by the mayor of Vila Nova de Gaia in the impressive townhall. The town's representatives gave us a warm welcome and emphasised how important the educational exchange on the European level is nowadays. Presents were exchanged as well.

Later, the headmaster, Mr Afonso, invited the teams for afternoon coffee in a beautiful hotel location overlooking Vila Nova de Gaia and Porto.

The meeting ended in the evening with the official friendship dinner at the spectacular restaurant of the port wine cellar of Porto Cruz.



Panorama of Vila Nova de Gaia (left), the river Duoro and Porto (right)

1st Meeting in Porto, Portugal, October 2015



As first-time visitors to Portugal my colleague and me were fascinated by the hospitality of the people, especially our hosts. Many people speak English, so communication is not really a problem. Porto is a relatively big city with a rich history, an awesome historic centre and a great infrastructure. The scenery at the famous metal bridge crossing the Duoro is fascinating, especially in the evening when everything is lit. A visit to the famous port wine cellars in Vila Nova de Gaia is a must. We will definitely come back to Porto on private terms.

It was a great experience to meet our Erasmus partners for the first time, although we know that the teams will probably partly change for each meeting. Friendship developed and we have kept in contact ever since. The great variety of countries situated in all corners and right in the middle of Europe gives a great impression of European diversity and makes you curious to explore how things are handled in our partner countries.



Friendship Dinner



Ludmila Renge, Project Coordinator

A note from Ludmila Renge

The destination for the first meeting in Porto was chosen because our Portuguese team's participants Laura and Nair were the initiators of the idea to create a project and invited us as partners.

The fascinating views of Porto gave the inspiration for the whole project. The meeting passed in a very warm atmosphere of mutual collaboration and understanding. The various presentations, prepared by schools showed that the participants have a big potential and willingness to work!

2nd Meeting in Lüdenscheid, Germany, March 2016



Written by the Croatian Team

The host school, Städtische Adolf-Reichwein-Gesamtschule, is a comprehensive school in the county of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany. The school's funding body is the town of Lüdenscheid. There are about 1200 students, from class 5 to 13, aged 11 to 19. They are ethnically mixed, just like the population in the town of Lüdenscheid. Many of the students are of Turkish origin while others come from Greece, Italy and Poland.

One of the basic principles of this school is that children of different origin learn together – so they are not sorted into different schools after primary school but stay together at one school where they can obtain different qualifications.

The host school has prepared an interesting and quite busy three day programme of the meeting. Each day started in the school, including a guided tour of the building as well as work on project topics (presentations/discussion).

In the afternoon of the first day, there was a trip to Bonn where the participants visited the local attractions like Beethoven's birth place, the market, the River Rhine and the Bundeshaus which served as the Provisional Parliament House of the Federal Republic of Germany from 1949 until 1999. There was also a guided tour of the House of History where the participating teachers learned a lot about the modern history of Germany since the Second World War.

In the afternoon of the second day, there was a Civil Reception at the town hall where all the participants met the Mayor of Lüdenscheid Dieter Dzewas who gave a nice speech welcoming all the partners. After that, all the participating teachers visited the Phänomenta (interactive science museum) in Lüdenscheid which was quite interesting.



All participants in the school hall



A welcome present for the headmaster



In the seminar room



House of History, Bonn

PARTICIPANTS

Latvia

- Ludmila Renge
- Yelena Chernakova
- Tatjana Moisejeva

Croatia

- Zdenka Barović
- Zvonimir Vuković
- Sanda Grubišić

Cyprus

- Christina Chimaridou
- Eva Adamou

Germany

- Frank Bisterfeld
- Ralph David
- Alessa Held
- Theresia Vogel
- Markus Ignatzek
- Theresa Bathe
- Astrid Ebnicher
- Carsten Lampe
- Rolf Bauerdick
- Ceyda Adiller

Iceland

- Halla Magnadóttir
- Helga Björt Möller

Portugal

- Sergio Afonso
- Maria Nair Fontes
- Maria Joao Rios
- Amelia Macedo Alves

2nd Meeting in Lüdenscheid, Germany, March 2016



The two major topics of the presentations of all the participating partners were:

- Sad and glorious moments in a country's history.
- Ethnic composition and analysis of students' composition and achievements.

The participants from each partner school held presentations about the history of their own country emphasising the sad and glorious moments and thus giving all the partners the opportunity to learn more about the history of all the participating countries.

Also, presentations were held about the ethnic composition of each country through history to the present. Special emphasis was given to the ethnic composition of each school and the comparison of achievements of native students and immigrant students.



House of History, Bonn



Meeting the headmaster, Frank Bisterfeld



Erasmus+ Party, Cabaret



Erasmus+ Party



Each day, all the participants had both lunch and dinner together which gave them a welcomed opportunity to get to know each other better and to share their knowledge and experiences as well as their cultures. This was especially true for the Erasmus+ Party held at school on the second evening with music, cabaret, theatre, drink, food and meeting colleagues.

In the evening of the third day, there was a Friendship dinner at Castle Altena where the partners expressed gratitude to each other for the successful cooperation on the project. A special thanks was given to the host school for the exceptional organisation of the meeting.

To conclude, it can be said that the meeting was both very successful in terms of achieving the project goals as well as it was very pleasant and interesting for all the participants.



Friendship Dinner

A note from Ludmila Renge

The programme of staying was well developed and full of various kinds of activities and all of them were held on a high level. The programme of Intercultural evening was amazing and unforgettable.

The school fascinated us with its tolerant attitude to refugees and well developed system of integration them into the community.

The presentations of the countries-participants on sad and glorious moments were touching and emotional and at the same time professionally made. We learnt a lot and started understand each country's situation nowadays better.

3rd Meeting in Split, Croatia, May 2016

Written by the Cyprus Team



The elementary school "Osnovna Skola Marjan" is situated in the western part of the city of Split. There are 490 students, aged 6 to 14, and 48 teachers. Apart from Croatian students, there are students from other European countries.

Everything regarding the meeting was well organised and we felt like part of a big family during the entire time. A choir of students every morning, was the best way to start our meetings. We cannot but feel thankful for the exceptional hospitality of our hosts.

On the first day, the teams were welcomed by the host partners at the school. After the welcome talk by the headteacher, Zdenka Barovic, we had a tour of the school where we had the opportunity to exchange ideas with the teachers and the students. During the tour, we got impressed by the beautiful art decorations, all made by recycle materials. Later in the morning, apart from the presentations held in school, we had a coffee break in a place close to school with a unique panoramic view of the city. Lunch was offered by our hosts in an elegant restaurant in the city centre. In the afternoon, a very informative city guided tour took place, which gave us the chance to meet the history and the culture of Split in depth.



All participants in the school entrance



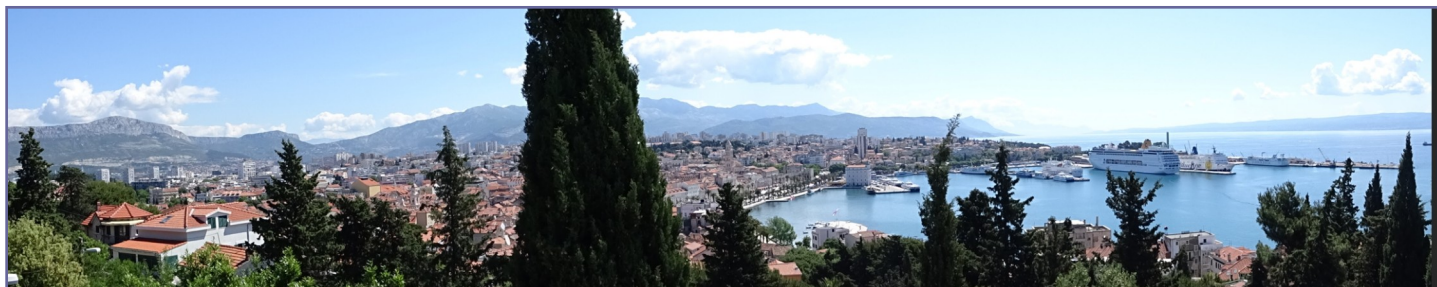
Beautiful art decorations in the school



Daily musical goodmorning



City guided tour



Unique panoramic view of Split

The second day also started with beautiful songs by students. Presentations were held and during break we had the chance to socialise with the other members of staff, who were very warm and friendly to us. In the afternoon, there was a trip to Trogir, a medieval city near Split. Trogir has a high concentration of palaces, churches and towers, as well as a fortress on a small island. There, apart from the scenic walks and the nice meal, we visited Kamerlengo castle, which offered us a spectacular view of the whole city.

On the last day we saw the remaining of the presentations and discussed the progress of the first year the project. The project coordinator, Ludmila Renge, summarised the requirements of the project and she suggested the guidelines of its continuation. Also, the teams agreed on the structure of the newsletter to be issued for the project. In the evening of that day, there was the official friendship dinner at the new marina of Split, where we had a delicious meal and the fascinating view of the city by night.



On the top of Kamerlengo castle, in Trogir

PARTICIPANTS

Latvia

- Ludmila Renge
- Irena Shinkareva
- Tatjana Moisejeva

Croatia

- Zdenka Barović
- Zvonimir Vuković
- Vesela Visic
- Sanda Grubišić

Cyprus

- David David
- Marina Christodoulou

Germany

- Frank Bisterfeld
- Ralph David
- Theresia Vogel

Iceland

- Halla Magnadóttir
- Bryndis Bjarnason

Portugal

- Sergio Afonso
- Maria Nair Fontes
- Maria Joao Rios
- Amelia Macedo Alves

3rd Meeting in Split, Croatia, May 2016



During the meeting in Split, the presentations had the following main topics:

- Who is coming to my country and who is leaving?
- An innovative teaching tool to enhance learning in multicultural classrooms.

Also, the Portuguese team presented a music lesson using chemistry elements, which will be adopted by all the teams and it will be presented on the 4th meeting in Cyprus.

Overall the 3rd meeting offered all the participants the chance to exchange important ideas about the project and also to enjoy the hospitality of the hosts and the beauty of the city of Split!



Our hosts



Portuguese team



Friendship Dinner



German team



Island team



Latvian team



Cyprus team

A note from Ludmila Renge

Split met us with pleasant weather, beautiful landscapes and friends' warm hugs. The fact that five heads of schools participated in the meeting gave it special importance.

The Croatian team prepared and showed a lot of terrific things at school and outside. We saw a team of creative teachers, high level specialists, many friendly and talented students. Half of the Project had gone and we looked back on what was achieved and made plans for the second year. It was a pleasure to see that the participants succeeded in doing of all tasks and I realised that the most important and valuable features of our team are creativeness and professionalism. Thank you dear friends for your work!



Erasmus+



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Math, Science and Languages in the Multicultural European Classroom,
to Increase Student Literacy and Prevent Early School Leaving**

[2015-1-LV01-KA219-013422]

LATVIA · CROATIA · CYPRUS · GERMANY · ICELAND · PORTUGAL

<http://erasmus.pdps.lv/>



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