



Erasmus+ D.E.M.O.S.

**Democratic Thinking in Education as a
Medium to Overturn Prejudices and
Stereotypes**



*Memories that last a
lifetime...*

Introduction for the program:

Democratic Thinking in Education as a Medium to overturn prejudices and Stereotypes is a KA229 School Exchange Partnership that involves 6 schools. These schools come from Cyprus, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Belgium and Bulgaria. This idea will act as a vivid reaction to today's challenges of great linguistic, cultural, educational, economic and technological diversity in the school community at local and European level.

The study of the principles of Democracy linked to toleration, inclusion and empathy as agents for positive development and mutual understanding will give wider dimension to the EU concepts of active citizenship, civic engagement, social responsibility and respect for heterogeneity. The cultivation of democratic thinking in students as a learning living attitude by means of cooperative interaction and sharing of ideas is in accordance with the project's goal to raise a future generation with profound democratic values.

During the program, each participating school welcomed students of different origin and diverse socio-economical backgrounds. This way all multi-ethnic schools tried to embrace these differences. The implementation of all short-term exchanges of students stimulated all participants' critical sense, encouraged creativity & foster participation in activities evolved in the school community. Through commitment and creativity, school partnerships generated strong community spirit, which makes a school more than just a building: it creates a learning environment where students feel the commitment of their fellow students, their teachers and their parents. By implementing certain approaches to volunteerism, community involvement, team-building & collaborative learning, D.E.M.O.S. has a multicultural and transdisciplinary character, respecting different needs and points of view.

The students travelling abroad were aged 13-17. This project definitely raised its participants' sense of responsibility and ability to work in a team of different backgrounds and it enriched their linguistic competence, using English as a common language through online chats, conversations, videos and e-mail.

To conclude, learning how to be an active EU citizen in a democratic multicultural community, while triggering a critical reflection on the meanings of social exclusion, marginalization, stereotypes and prejudices, is indeed a rigorous yet fruitful task. The students' motivation to collaborate productively in conjunction with the usage of innovative practices in the areas of e-learning and digital technologies will strengthen all participants' self-confidence and will reinforce the aspects of cultural identity and tolerance, building and brightening all schools' international perspective. An educational system elaborated in accordance with the founding principles of democracy and the human rights promotes the development of key competences and social practices that will foster togetherness and solidarity.

A few words by the headmaster of the coordination school, Terra Santa College

Mr. Aristotelous Evagoras:

European projects are a unique experience for students and teachers in every school. Nowadays, we need young minds to travel to Europe, to learn, to experience something different and in turn to contribute to the society they live in, making it better for themselves and future generations. Our society needs people who are driven by a sense of justice, equality and acceptance of diversity. The D.E.M.O.S. project was a unique journey of knowledge and a source of experience that will undoubtedly help our own children to broaden their horizons and spread knowledge to their peers and the wider Cypriot reality. We would like to thank the European Union and the national agency (IDEP-Lifelong Learning European Program Management Foundation) for funding and making this journey easier for us.

ERASMUS D.E.M.O.S. ERVARINGSVERSLAGEN

Camille Jansen

Hello!

I've been waiting for this week for 2 years (because of corona). And then that week suddenly stood before me! A lot of nerves, but definitely worth it.

This week I expected to bond with the person who is staying with me as well as with the others. From the second day I started thinking about how much I will miss these people! I definitely underestimate how close you become as a group. Spending whole days together and telling each other personal things is something that you can not do with all people. It was a unique experience!

Receiving people in your house is definitely something special, something we were not used to as a family. But it has brought us closer together as a family. It was a unique experience and I would do it again if that was possible. It made me also excited to go to other countries, to experience other ways of living.

It was also nice to visit the cities where you come frequently but didn't take the time to visit. You could tell all your memories that you made in the cities.

It was very nice that the people/friends with other countries were so interested in our culture and system, because for us it might be normal but it opens your eyes. You talk about how our system works and then you can compare it with the system from the other countries. Personally I noticed that it takes a lot of time to make laws. It is also a very complicated process with a lot of factors that have an influence. And for Belgium these laws are very important because the law is king in Belgium.

I recommend this project to everyone who is interested in other systems and would like to connect with people all over the world.

Bye, Camille

Anouk van Heijzen

I participated in this project, because I want to learn all about new cultures while also learning about democracy and politics. It's interesting to learn how other countries think about different subjects. We also learned about how hard it is to make laws, with the roleplaying game of the European parliament. We all had to work together, which made us realize that it's a lot of work to vote for a new law.

When I knew that I was going to host 2 Italian girls, I was very nervous. I wondered how it would be to be with 2 strangers 24/7 a whole week. A few weeks later, we exchanged our contact information so we started talking on Instagram. I got to know them a little bit, but I was still very

nervous and I still didn't really realize that they were almost coming. My expectation of the project was that we would get to know different cultures, see how it is for people from other countries to live in Belgium for a week, and how our school system is different from theirs.

Sunday morning, I was really nervous because Carlotta and Chiara from Italy were coming. When they arrived, we instantly clicked. Even though everybody was a bit shy, we quickly started talking and getting to know each other. At this moment I knew the week was going to be super fun and that I would never forget it.

Indra Hautekeete

At first we just knew the names of the people who were going to come to Belgium and sleep at our places. At that point we were already very excited to meet them. Then we got in touch on Instagram. The girl, Flaminia from Italy, who was going to sleep at my place was also very excited to come to Belgium. She was very sweet in her texts so I was relieved. Flaminia is very spontaneous so we talk very smoothly with each other, there are no awkward or long silences. Her English is also super good, which I wasn't really expecting. So that was a pleasant surprise. I already learned a lot of the habits and differences between Belgium and Rome. The thing that surprised me the most is that they don't react to the ringing of bikers. The bikers ring their bell to let the people know they are going the bike past you so you can make some place for them. But they don't pay attention to bikes at all. She also likes all of the Belgian food. Because of the way the foreigners see Belgium we also look at Belgium in a different way and learn new things about it as well. One stereotype about Italians is that they are slow and take their time to get ready, but it's really not that big of an issue. We also visited the European parliament to learn how the politics work in Belgium and in the European Uni. There are different sections in Politics with different goals and beliefs, but they have to work together to get a majority to get the law accepted. So they have to work together and compromise on their own beliefs. We have a king in Belgium but he doesn't wear the crown. The justice system in Belgium wears the crown, the law has the most important power. The project meets up to my expectation, everyone is very open and interested. So far it has been a very pleasant experience.

Emilia Vandervelde

I joined the program to step out of my comfort zone and to push my limits. Getting to know other people from different countries and seeing all differences and similarities. I expected it to be really educational and fun. I expected to see the differences and similarities between all countries and people and all their different systems. I expected to learn a lot. Even though we are all countries from the EU and are all in the European Parliament our democracies are still different. We have whole different governments, laws and rules. After that we went to the Belvue Museum to learn about Belgium's history. I thought it was really interesting and cool to see and learn all of those things. The exchange students also found it fun to see and learn about our democracy. Tuesday we went to Brussels again. First we played a role playing game in the European Parliament. They explained how the EU and European Parliament works. It was a fun way to learn about our politics and democracy. We got to experience the whole

process of making European laws and rules and the whole voting process with all the different countries. We had to discuss a lot and had to make a lot of compromises. We had to take every opinion from all citizens, ministers, presidents,... into consideration. There were a lot of different opinions and points of views. We also saw the palace of justice. The biggest and most important court of Belgium. We showed them around and they found it really pretty. I found it nice to see Belgium from a different, touristic and democratic perspective.

Maxine De Smet

2 years ago I signed up for this project. I have been looking forward to it since then. It always seemed so far away and suddenly it was Sunday, the day that they arrived. I was very nervous, but I think most of that nervousness was excitement. This was a moment that I had been waiting for a long time and suddenly it was there.

I subscribed to this project with the thought that it would be an eye-opening experience, to meet a lot of interesting people and to learn something about the other cultures.

My expectations are definitely in line with how this week is going. The group is very nice, the Sunday that they arrived we all went to a bar together and I couldn't wait to talk to everybody.

I also learned a few things about the Spanish culture but I think that I will learn the most about the other cultures next year, when we're going to other countries.

It was also a new experience to have someone staying with you for a whole week. I definitely think that it creates a bond with the person who is staying with you. You're together with the whole group all day and afterwards you get to go home with one person and she is like your family for a week. Another thing that creates a bond is the fact that you're responsible for her. I sometimes felt like I had a sister because I was suddenly living with a girl and I could do things with her that I can't do with my brother, so that was also a nice experience.

Having someone staying with you also 'pushes' you to do something productive after school because you don't just want to put them in their room. So you play games with them, you socialize a bit, you go for a walk and do other activities then just for example scrolling through social media.

I already learned a lot this week, for example at the Parliamentarium. Even though I live in Belgium, it was interesting to see how the law works and how it's such a slow process. I think that the Belgian people also learned new things about their own country because we visited some places that we would probably never visit ourselves.

I definitely don't regret participating in this project and I'm looking forward to the rest of the week and next year.

William Vanden Abeele

DEMOS project in Belgium

When last year I got the presentation from Mr Panis about the project I immediately told myself that I would participate in the project. My brother did the same 4-5 yrs ago and he definitely didn't regret it. I am a very open person to new and different cultures and love to find out how others live their lives. Learning about new cultures and their habits is something I find very fascinating.

My expectations for the Erasmus+ programme were pretty high. I hoped that it would be a week full of visiting, learning and getting in touch with new cultures. Monday we showed them our school, and the most memorable thing that stuck with me was their faces when they saw all of the bikes. In the afternoon we went to the Bruxelles where we saw the Royal Palace, the Warande park and the Belvue museum. In the Belvue museum we learned about Belgian history: our voting system through time, the different Belgian kings, how the state is segregated from religion etc. The Belvue museum was a new and interesting experience. Tuesday morning we visited the European parliament and played a roleplaying game where we became a MEP ourselves to find out how democracy works in the EU. After this experience in group we were all able to conclude that the process of passing new legislations is a long and complicated process full of rules and setbacks. Afterwards we talked about the differences between different ways that democracy work in each of our countrys. Portugal has for example a prime minister and a president, but doesn't have a sovereign king or royal family. European law making takes a lot of time because of the many steps, which is why it takes so much time to pass laws in the parlement. In the afternoon we showed them around Bruxelles, with manneke pis as the biggest disappointment. One of the exchange students compared manneke pis with the Mona Lisa, as both of them are just so much smaller in person in comparison with their expectations made from pictures they saw before coming to Belgium. Wednesday afternoon we visited Leuven, the student city. They were all impressed when seeing all of the bikes and we told them that moving around by car isn't handy in such a small and compact city as Leuven. Thursday we went to Brugge and visited the Groeninge Museum in the morning and the historical center of the city in the afternoon. They found the architecture of the old buildings very fascinating and beautiful.

Maya Renard

I chose to take part in the D.E.M.O.S. project at our school, because I thought it was a nice way to get to know different cultures and people. I also took part in it because I wanted to know how democracy works in other countries, and also in my country because I didn't really know a lot about it.

Before Andrea came to Belgium, my expectations weren't very high, because I didn't know what to expect. I didn't know if it was going to be amazing or very boring. But generally I looked forward to it. I just really hoped that it was going to be nice with her. When I came to the airport, I was very nervous because I had to spend a whole week without any free time for myself with a stranger. Before we first met each other, we had contact on Instagram, so I already knew her a bit. I was nervous because our texts were a bit cold, so I thought it was going to be boring the whole week. But when I saw her for the first time, we immediately hugged each other. It was a nice icebreaker. So it lived up to what I was hoping for.

I chose to host someone from Cyprus because I didn't know anything about that country. I had been to Italy, Spain and Portugal before so I knew these countries already a little bit. Also I thought Cyprus was a nice country and the lives of the people there were different from our life, so I was curious about it.

Tuesday we went to Brussels to the parliament and there we played a roleplaying game to understand the democracy better from the European Parliament. We had to be people from

different countries in different parties and we had to compromise on two subjects. By doing that, we got to know how the European Parliament works and how difficult it is and why it takes such a long time to make decisions.

Victor Carpentier de Changy

Our first erasmus+ meeting happened in Belgium. We met each other for the first time and learned more about the different cultures of our guests. I expected to share habits and experiences between us. It permitted me to expand my look on other cultures. That is the reason why I participate in the project. I love to discover new cultures and countries. I expect to see traditional things about the host country like for example fries or chocolate here in Belgium.

Like the name of the project says, the theme is democracy. That is why we went to the palace of justice because here in Belgium is the law king. We also went to the royal palace to see the difference between the two monuments. We could notice that the justice palace is a lot bigger than the royal palace. I hope we will have the possibility to see the differences between the different democracies of other countries. Wednesday we went to Leuven and saw the buildings of the oldest university. We also went to Bruges to visit the Groeninge Museum. In the museum there are a lot of paintings of popular Belgian artists. Then we walked a bit in the city to show our guests how nice Bruges is. On Friday we visited the Africa museum in Tervuren. It was very interesting to know more about Belgium's colonial past.

Our guests were very polite and kind so it was nice to have them at home. We played a lot of games and ate typical Belgian food. We showed them the Sonian Forest and they were impressed by all the green there is in Belgium. This week was a good experience and I would do it again without any hesitation.

Tharika Narongsack

I'm not going to lie, I was very nervous at first. Even before we arrived at the airport my stomach was already turning and my heart was racing. They were nerves of excitement though. They went away once we arrived back home and we immediately started talking and got more comfortable. She's a very open and easy going person which makes it a lot easier for me and my family. I'm very grateful that I got her to share this experience with.

We visited a lot of buildings and monuments that us Belgians don't appreciate anymore. We wouldn't stop to look at them at all nor go inside. So even for us it was a first time experience which was definitely not what I expected. I did however expect to visit a lot of the typical Belgian sites but we kept it pretty focused around the project which allowed us to learn new things about our country. For example, the history of our political system. Belgium has a king but he doesn't have the power to make decisions for our country. That was made clear to us by visiting the palace of justice which has a crown on top of it. That represents that the law stands above all.

It's also very important here that every political party thinks about everyone even though they have their own ideas and target audience. If they decide not to do that then they simply won't get as many votes. This is also something that we were taught this week by playing a roleplaying game at the parliamentarium in Brussels. It was very educational and interactive which made it refreshing.

This was an amazing and unforgettable experience that will stay with me forever.

Emile Maenhout

I chose to do this erasmus program because I am fascinated by the differences between different cultures. I am convinced that this gives you a new perspective about the other countries of the European Union that we would otherwise not experience.

This erasmus project has been very interesting to learn about other cultures. When I was signing up for this project I wasn't sure what to expect. Especially from the students that are coming to Belgium and that I would be accomodating. I wasn't sure if they would appreciate our culture and our food. Luckily they did and were very polite.

We shared our cultures and both got to learn a lot! We obviously also got to learn about each others democracies as the name of our project suggest *demos*.

On Tuesday we went to the European parliament and got the chance to play a role playing game as a member of the european parliament with our entire group. This was very interesting because we had to discuss new laws with each other. I learned a lot about how the other countries looked at certain topics compared to us. We also discovered that European law making is very slow because of the long process it takes.

On Monday we visited the Belvue museum which I had personally never visited before. I got the chance to explain some Belgian facts to my guests and to also learn some history about Belgium that I didn't know about.

Wednesday afternoon we went to Leuven where we showed them the well known Katholic University. They had the chance to see how the life of a Belgian university student goes. Since we are in Belgium we had to show them Brugge which is well known for its ancient buildings and paintings. We shared some of our culture by visiting the Groeninge Museum where as a Belgian I recognized some iconic artworks, which I had no idea were there. Friday was a special day since it was Chrisostimos at school. The seniors were celebrating their final year by putting hairspray on everyone. In the afternoon we went to the colonial palace here in Tervuren to teach them about the history of Belgium and Congo.

I have made a lot of memories this week and look forward to going to a country next year!

Cato Van Roey

Before my guest arrived I was very nervous but also excited. Once Chiara arrived most of my nerves were gone because she is really kind. Just like I expected, I learned alot about Italy from her. Because we live together and spent a lot of time together, I have the feeling I have known her for months but it has only been a couple of days. I thought it would be difficult to share my

space with someone I didn't know but it turned out to be much easier than I thought. I did have to adapt to the Italian way of living a bit but I tried to make my guest see the Belgian way of living. I was relieved I was in contact with my guest before she arrived. This way I could get to know her a bit more and ask some general questions. Once at the airport it was a real advantage that I knew her before so it wasn't as awkward as I had imagined it. The only downside on this project thus far is the language barrier I experience with my guest. Luckily we have technology to help us and more specifically Google Translate this way we can understand each other. I'm very grateful I get to be a part of this project because I have learned a lot more than expected. Not only about the other countries and people from different nationalities but also about Belgium and the way foreigners see our country. It is refreshing to experience the way they see Belgium because they are so excited and amazed you also start to see Belgium that way. In short it is an eye-opener for me and this is the exact reason I participated in this project. I know that the connections I am building here will last for a long time and I hope we can meet with these people again outside of the DEMOS project. I know this project focuses mainly on democracy and I have to admit, it was an interesting experience to do the role play in our parliament. We got to see the way Europ makes laws and mainly how slow it goes and how much you have to compromise in order to get anywhere. To sum it up, I'm really enjoying this week.

Margaux Räuchle

Like everyone participating in Erasmus, I didn't know what to expect. I have never done anything like this before, so obviously, I was nervous. I didn't know where I was going to, I didn't know when and who was coming to my house.

My expectations were mixed. First of all, I knew Belgium was going to be very different for the exchange students. Our habits and ways of living are obviously quite different from theirs. This suspicion turned out to be correct.

Secondly, I was scared that I wouldn't like the people coming here or the other way around, and that this week would be awkward or boring. But I didn't believe all of these stressful thoughts and I had faith that this would be a fun and educational experience. And I wasn't wrong!

When I met my Spanish guest, I was pleasantly surprised. She is nice, talkative and very interested in Belgium. I noticed that her habits are completely different. I wake up an hour and a half earlier than her, she eats different things and listens to different music. She also pointed out some things that I never think twice about, like the amount of nature around where I live.

Not only my guest but also the group was a nice surprise. They are excited about the places we're visiting and are eager to learn more about Belgium. We saw the Belvue Museum where we learned more about the history of this country, we played a role playing game in the Parliament, which showed us how the Belgian democratic system works, and we saw the palace of justice, where we got a peak of the Belgian justice system. Visiting Brugge showed them part of our long history and the Africa museum showed them part of this history that is a

little less pretty. All in all the exchange students (and the Belgians!) learned more about our beautiful country.

Flaminia Pozzi, Liceo Louis Pasteur (Italy)

When my English teacher told me the first time about the Erasmus+ project I was so excited that I requested to participate immediately. After a couple of months when I finally got the news that I was actually a part of the project I felt extremely honored and I started to search for information about the different cities to find the perfect one for me.

So I realized that Belgium had everything I was searching for: I was looking forward to improving my English, but at the same time I wanted to have a funny experience, learn about another culture and have my first trip without my family.

Not only have I found all of this, but also I have been able to experience different activities such as visiting interesting museums and having long walks in the cities. In the complex I can say that I lived a typical Belgian life for a whole week.

Even if Belgium it's relatively close to Italy, I found some differences from my homeland, firstly in the fact that everyone uses bikes to move around the city, then from the various typical foods, the large amount of parks that are present or from the multilingualism and the heterogeneity of culture and traditions.

Above all, I learned about the concept of democracy in Belgium, that was also the crucial point of this Erasmus+ project. In fact, the king of Belgium does not have a crown, which we can however find on top of the courthouse and this means that the supreme power of the state is not the monarch, as we can imagine, but the Law.

Chiara (Italy)

one years ago, I wanted to take part in this project because I wanted to improve my English and I was expecting that this project would be very interesting. I thought right because my host family is very understanding and welcoming. So they make me feel at home. During this day together we visited a parliament and the all center of bruxelles. This has been really interesting and it was a different experience. I have learnt a lot from belgian culture and also i have discovered that belgian.l'm not really good at speaking English, for this reason I was a little bit nervous the first day, but my host family has been really kind with me and they have helped me a lot. Unfortunately on Thursday I came back to Rome for an important match and the family has supported me. I discovered that belgian speaks three very nice languages because belgian is divided in two parts: the north part where they speak flemish and south part where they speak french. so they speak French, dutch and english. It is very good.

During the week we saw the seat of the European parliament, we saw how it works and it was a lot of fun and interesting. Everyone expressed their opinion and tried to agree as best they can with senior members of parliament to make their ideas prevail. Also the visit to the African museum was very interesting.

It was a wonderful experience because I had the opportunity to know their culture and their way of behaving.

Tiago Caldeira

Hi, my name is Tiago Caldeira, I'm 15 years old and I'm from Portugal. I have decided to participate in the D.E.M.O.S project because I've always wanted to visit Belgium and the main topic of this project (democracy) is of my interest. I expected to improve my English, as I don't speak any of Belgium's official languages (Dutch, French and German), and learn more about democracy and how it works. I find it especially important to learn about democracy because we all should understand how the system works.

On Sunday, our host family picked us up at the airport and took us to their home. We went for a walk in the Tervuren Park, and I was very impressed by how beautiful the vegetation and the lakes were. On Monday, the Belgian students showed us the school and then we went to Brussels by tram and subway, where we had lunch in a park, and then we visited the Belvue Museum, which talked about very important achievements in the history of Belgian democracy, such as the right to vote becoming more common. On Tuesday, we visited the Parliamentarium in Brussels, where we played a roleplaying game about how projects are approved/refused in the European Parliament. Then in the afternoon, we had a tour through Brussels, and visited some stunning places, like the Grand-Place. On Wednesday, we passed some time on the Tervuren Park, and in the afternoon, we went by bus to Leuven, a student city, and took a walk around. On Thursday morning, we visited the Groeningemuseum, a museum about Flemish art, located in Brugge, a medieval city, and in the afternoon, we walked around the city. On Friday, we visited the Royal Museum for Central Africa, in Tervuren, where we learnt about the enslavement and exploitation that the people of Congo suffered during the Belgian colonial period.

In conclusion, I have really enjoyed this trip, as I have visited several beautiful places, and learnt a lot about democracy. Belgium is a very beautiful country, very similar to Portugal.

Experiences from Belgium – Erasmus+

Within the framework of the D.E.M.O.S program - Democratic thinking in Education as a Medium to Overturn prejudices and Stereotypes

By

Costas Dalitis

After a long period of confinement due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the time has come to return to the daily activities that students from all member countries of the program have been waiting for. Thus, a 6-member delegation of students and two accompanying professors of Terra Santa College participated in the first transnational meeting within the framework of the European Erasmus+ program under the name D.E.M.O.S - Democratic thinking in Education as a Medium to Overturn prejudices and Stereotypes, which took place in Belgium (Brussels , Bruges, Tervuren) from 25 April until 30 April 2021.



The partner countries of the program are secondary schools from Italy, Spain, Belgium, Bulgaria and Portugal. Cyprus, which is represented by Terra Santa College, has the coordinating role in the project. The team was hosted by Heilig Hartcollege in Tervuren, a small town just outside Brussels. During the transnational meeting, the students Avgi Economou, Andrea Ahha, Mattheos Iosif and Christos Kythreotis, together with teachers Rania Karagiannidou and Astero Charalambous had the opportunity to participate in various workshops and educational tours on the cultural heritage of the country- partner.

Day 1: Monday, April 25, 2022

On the day after arrival, the guests were taken for a short tour of the Heilig Hartcollege school, where they were warmly greeted by their hosts. This was followed by a tour of the Belvue museum in Brussels. Democracy, prosperity, solidarity, pluralism, immigration, language and Europe were the themes through which the Belvue museum tried to bring guests into contact with Belgium. Each topic is elaborated on the basis of contemporary testimonies and then explained through Belgian history. A modern and original way for everyone to get a better picture of today's Belgium. In these topics, the institutions and democratization of Belgium were also included.



Day 2: Tuesday, April 26, 2022

The second day started with guided tours of the European neighborhood - Parliamentarium at the European Parliament. There the attendees had the opportunity to take part in a role play. The role-playing game is designed for groups of secondary school students. Players were divided into imaginary political groups and put themselves in the shoes of Members of the European Parliament. Discussing current issues and topics, they learned how European Union legislation is created. The role-play reveals the full extent of the legislative process, from consulting interest groups and building alliances to negotiating with other institutions and speaking to the media.



The afternoon included a tour of Brussels and a visit to the Palace of Justice. Here the students learned about the separation of powers and the importance of a strong judiciary. What made an impression among others is that Brussels is the largest and most cosmopolitan city in Belgium. The lingua franca is English and it is home to 183 nationalities. Brussels is also considered to be the political center of Belgium as well as the European Union and NATO.

Day 3: Wednesday, April 27, 2022

On day three, the teams headed to Tervuren. The morning started with the creation and updating of the E-twinning page with material related to the meeting. This was followed by afternoon free activities organized by Belgian students in Leuven.

Leuven has the largest university in Belgium and teaches 140 nationalities from all over the world. Leuven is the educational and scientific center of Belgium. During the course the students, hosts and guests engaged in several different activities that helped them get closer, learn new things and also have fun!

Day 4: Thursday, April 28, 2022

The following day we went to Bruges. The morning started with a virtual tour of medieval Bruges. Bruges is considered one of the most beautiful cities in Belgium and attracts millions of tourists from all over the world. Bruges was the international financial center

of Europe during the Middle Ages and this legacy continues to this day. As said, Bruges is considered as one of the main cultural cities of Belgium.

The visit to the Groeninge museum continued in the afternoon of the same day. This museum has a large collection of European works of art that are considered cultural European heritage. Including Van Eyck, Breughel, Rubens, Margritte and Hieronymus Bosch.

Day 5: Friday, April 29, 2022

The last day has arrived. In the morning, everyone visited the Royal Museum for Central Africa located in Tervuren. As the students learned, Belgium has a colonial period in Congo. This museum shows the history and the reason why Brussels has one of the largest, if not the largest, Central African community in Europe. Students also learned how the colonial government achieved its rule over the population and prevented democracy. Tervuren was presented as the main place to understand the social diversity and colonial history of Belgium.

The afternoon was followed by a visit to Heilig Hartcollege. There, the professors discussed the next meeting in Sofia, Bulgaria.

On the next morning, students and teachers, loaded with emotions and new knowledge and friendships, said goodbye to Belgium, renewing their appointment in Sofia for September.

Andrea Ahha (Cyprus)

In general, I haven't seen anything too shocking that happens in Belgium which is different from Cyprus. However, there are obvious differences that can be noted.

To begin with, everything here is organised. All the houses have similar structure and are all in a line, where in Cyprus each house is differently built and they can be placed anywhere.

Also, everyone here respects nature. The parks are kept clean and there are trash bins at all corners. Public transport is mostly used and cars are avoided. Most students either go by bike or by bus to school. The infrastructure is good enough to support public transport and much more.

Finally, I was impressed by the fact that in the house everyone helps and does not expect one person to do everything!

Christos Kythreotis (Cyprus)

Well... The (almost) five hour flight was super tiring! Super nervous about having host families and not just staying in a hotel. I expected a strict and cold family rather than the warmest, most

welcoming individuals that I've met. I can't say the same about the weather though! It is "toes falling off", freezing cold.

Belgium is an altogether aesthetic on its own. There's green everywhere. In Tervuren, where I'm staying, there's not a lot to do but I am getting used to its calmness. There's always a park where you can walk along side the river and pass the beautiful museum of African history.

However, Brussels is a completely different story. Tall buildings and grey concrete all around. The parliament was great as we got to experience how legislation passes and how it comes to be. In my opinion, The Palace of Justice was incredible because we visualised the conflict between the French speaking population with the Dutch speaking population and how they came to co-exist.

Lastly, when I was about to register to get into the project, I just wanted to go abroad. But getting here and meeting other students from other countries was the best thing out of all of this! Conversing with the other students has made us all realise how different our lives are ,yet how similar!

Mattheos Iosif (Cyprus)

I have always wanted to travel and find out about new cultures and how life is in other countries. I wanted to make lifelong friends and have lasting bonds with people from many countries, something that erasmus provides. I wanted to visit and see new places and new monuments and learn their own history which always amazes me because every country has an amazing history.

My first idea of Belgium was a multinational European capital. I expected the weather to be cold and it was. The food here is quite different from Cyprus but it's delicious, especially their desserts and waffles. I was especially amazed by their architecture, especially of old government buildings like the Palace of Justice. It is also strange that the country has two languages, French and Dutch and in their capital they speak the universal language, English. It's something that you don't see in many countries. Another interesting thing was the importance of the law and how much people follow the law and in return they get good education and healthcare, something that my country still struggles with. Their education system is similar but also different from ours. They do as many years as us in Cyprus but their grading system and their exams for the university are different from ours. But their education system gives a fair chance at every one to pass to a university but in cyprus thats not always the casa. However, in Cyprus it's easier to find low education jobs than in brussels.

I will soon finish school so I won't be able to participate in any new Erasmus+ projects but I will definitely join Erasmus projects when I go to university. I will always try to be a part of Erasmus because it always provides me with new good experiences.

Life experience

In conclusion, this experience was valuable and undoubtedly a once in a lifetime experience. Goodbyes are never easy, especially with new friends, with whom they have shared so much in these few days. Although the first trip has come to an end, the project is ongoing with a new destination next September: Bulgaria. Terra Santa College will be ready to give students and teachers the opportunity to experience this magical part of the European family.

The trip to Bulgaria through the eyes of the students

On October 2, the second mobility of the ERASMUS DEMOS European program took place in Bulgaria in which Terra Santa College took part. Students and teachers participated in various seminars held in the Bulgarian school, where students from different countries came into contact, knowing each other's culture and diversity, accepting that the fruitful interaction between people with different views and ideas makes life more interesting and is a fundamental element for progress and development in society.

Below you will read some perspectives from this experience that our students had.



An unforgettable experience in Bulgaria

Visiting Bulgaria with the European Program Erasmus+ D.E.M.O.S. was an unforgettable experience. We were given the opportunity to meet people of our age from different countries and discover their cultures. The school, which hosted us, welcomed us with great warmth and surprised us with its way of working. In addition, the students were willing to show us around so that we could get to know the city better. In the evenings, together with all the groups we went out for dinner, where we had the opportunity to cultivate new friendships. Although there was a difficulty in communicating with the citizens of the host country due to the language, our days went smoothly. Difficult for us was also the moment when we had to say goodbye to all the teams and individuals after the program ended. However, we still keep in touch on social media and many of us have built friendships that will last. We are looking forward to seeing you again soon!

Alexis Antoniou



Participating in DEMOS Program!

As part of the DEMOS program of ERASMUS+, we were invited to go to Bulgaria for a week. So, together with my classmates and two teachers of my school, we set out for a truly special experience. There, we were given the opportunity to attend foreign language classes such as Arabic, Japanese and Korean. In addition, we visited the city of Plovdiv (city of Philip), which fascinated us with its unique architecture. Due to the hotel's central location in Sofia, we had the opportunity to make excursions and get to know the city and its residents better. Our most special experience however, was our meeting with the participants from other countries, which gave us the opportunity to get to know the cultures of their countries but also to exchange opinions on the lifestyle and traditions in our countries. . This experience has been really etched in my memory and I would love to live it again!

Andria Mavrotheri

DEMOS in Sofia

My trip to Bulgaria was an unforgettable experience full of happy memories. From our first day in Sofia, I was enthralled by the architecture and the culture of its people. The school that hosted us made us feel welcomed. Students and teachers, through various activities carried out at the host school, gave us the opportunity to get closer to customs and traditions not only of Bulgaria but also of Korea, Japan and Arabia. At the same time, I feel proud because through this trip both my classmates and I managed to convey a taste of our culture and for the first time become small ambassadors of our country. Equally important was the fact that I made friends with the children from the other countries and this greatly contributed to the strengthening of the feeling of acceptance of children of a different culture. The week I have spent in Erasmus will always be unforgettable!

Mike Sergides



A week in Bulgaria

In Bulgaria, I got the chance to meet some amazing people and learn about their nationalities and countries. I got the chance to teach them about my country and find differences between them for all types of themes such as school system, university life and life in the countryside in general. I was also able to visit a school in Bulgaria and learn how their system works, which is obviously very different from ours. We also went around the town to see some amazing sights and eat traditional food. I am very grateful that I got this chance by my school and the program. I hope this program never stops because it gives to a lot of children the opportunity to meet some amazing people and the chance to broaden their knowledge.

Chris Kythreotis

Erasmus+ D.E.M.O.S.: A week in Italy.

By,

Marilia Frantzia

Anna kyriakidou Kolomvou

Vasilis Vourmous

Iosif Ilia



Undoubtedly, my experience within the Erasmus+ program will be unforgettable. The trip to Rome taught us a lot, both about Italy's tradition and religion and about its great culture and ancient history. Rome is a living museum and enchants every visitor as wherever one looks, one is sure to see something impressive. At the same time we were given the opportunity to explore Rome, to get in touch with the educational system and specifically with the school program of the Liceo Scientifico Louis Pasteur. I think, the most important part of the program was the fact that we met students of our age from different countries and in a short period of time we managed to create close friendships. At the same time, through the various seminars we attended, we discussed the democratic state and its operation in each participating country separately. We exchanged ideas and opinions about the great state of democracy and we certainly returned full of knowledge and experience. I hope and wish that we can maintain contact with these people and as we said in Rome: "We are not saying goodbye, but see you again!"

Marilia Frantzia

Our trip to Italy through the European Erasmus+ program was a combination of many adventures and unforgettable memories. We visited many sights and learned important

information about the history of Italy. More specifically, we were guided to the Colosseum, the Roman Forum, the Pantheon, the Vatican and many other wonderful sights that are widely known and are part of the history of the entire world. Additionally, we found out why Italy is so famous for its traditional food and especially for pizza, pasta and tiramisu! In general, the people there have a very different culture but the similarities we have as a society are amazing as they are very welcoming, outgoing and kind. We were able to communicate in their language and this made us realize that we have quite mastered the Italian language. This is another factor that made our stay there even more enjoyable. Since we spent many hours in their Italian school and were given the opportunity to experience their daily routine. Overall, this whole experience gave me unforgettable memories, helped me meet new and different people from different countries and acquire a lot of knowledge. I can conclude that we learned a lot in a very fun way.

Anna Kyriakidou Kolomvou

Last November, we were lucky enough to travel to Italy as a part of our participation in the D.E.M.O.S Erasmus + program. We visited monuments and archaeological sites that made us love and appreciate Italy even more. In Italy we made friends, created unforgettable memories and experienced incredible adventures. We managed to bond a lot with all the students of the program and to experience very special moments together that we will remember forever. When it was time to say goodbye to them, we couldn't hold back our tears. We hope to see our friends again in February here in Cyprus and share thoughts and emotions.

Vasilis Vourmous



The trip to Rome has been one of the best moments of my life. This trip gave me the opportunity to practice my knowledge of the Italian language since I have been learning it in my school. At

the same time, it gave me the opportunity to come into contact with people from different countries and discover how easily strong friendships can be formed. After all, there are more things that unite us than what divides us! We also tasted the special traditional food of Italy and admired the sights that made us feel in awe of this culture. It was a unique experience that every student would like to experience. I am looking forward to meeting them again.

Iosif Ilia

D.E.M.O.S. Erasmus+:

From Cyprus to Bilbao.

The moment we have all been waiting for has arrived. All ready. But we didn't count on the obstacle that would appear in front of us. Due to a strike, our flight had to be cancelled. So we had to adjust to our circumstances. Having already had the experience of several hours spent in front of a screen during the COVID-19 season, we tried to participate online during the first 2 days of the program.



Day 1, 27 March 2023: We took an online tour of the Spanish school. We were amazed by the architecture and facilities of the school. Afterwards, each country presented a landmark song about their culture; a very nice and fun experience. We heard songs that were familiar to everyone through the students' unique presentation.



Day 2, 28 March 2023: Still online. The bags are packed; the suspense is at its peak. The trip we've been waiting for is finally approaching. Last presentation before our departure. The countries had the opportunity to present how the European Union promotes one of its core principles, democracy. Filled with this experience, we depart for the airport. Next stop, Bilbao.



Day 3, 29 March 2023: The morning woke us up in the city of Bilbao. After being welcomed by our hosts at the I.E.S. Mikel de Unamuno BHI school, we set off for our excursion to San Sebastian. The children and teachers had the opportunity to wander around the picturesque, seaside town and discover its beauties. We then found ourselves in Eureka for a three-hour unique, educational experience! Science Museum. There, everyone had the opportunity to learn new things as well as practice their existing knowledge of physics, biology and astrology. Tired but full from the experience we set off for our return to Bilbao.



Day 4, March 30, 2023: Second day in Bilbao and the program started with an excursion to San Juan. First stop was the majestic and pleasantly tiring landscape of Gaztelugatxe/Dragonstone. We then arrived in Guernica where we had the opportunity to see the Basque assembly and administration center and learn about the bombing and destruction of the city in 1937 during the civil war. The afternoon found us back at our base in Bilbao.



Day 5, March 31, 2023: Last day of the programme is Friday. The day started with a Basque language workshop organized by the hosts. Students and teachers had the opportunity to exchange linguistic similarities and different languages spoken by the program participants. Afterwards, we visited the Museum of Plaster Homonyms where we had an interesting tour. On our return to the Basque school, we had the closing ceremony where the certificates of participation and prizes for the different activities were given. After a warm applause for everyone, a reception with local food, the so-called pintxos made by the school students, followed. After everyone was empowered, we headed to the ballroom where everyone demonstrated their dancing skills to the rhythm of traditional dances.

Through the eyes of the students...

Erasmus in Bilbao was a really unique experience for me because I had the chance to meet another country and culture and of course broaden my horizons. Living and communicating with people from other communities and places, really helps you understand the world better and see new things that you might not see in your country. A thing that I liked is that I got to learn more about the place and learn about Basque history which I found really interesting. Also, it was a great opportunity to learn new languages and communicate with people that live away from us. I am so glad that I had the chance to be a member of this amazing group and family, the Erasmus family.

By

IOANNATHEOKLI



I had the opportunity to have a great experience in the wonderful city of Bilbao! There, I gained a lot of knowledge, got to know new places, people and cultures at the same time. It was an unforgettable experience as I seemed lucky enough to be an option in the Erasmus programme!

Through this option, I was able to communicate better with the people around me and this helped me to develop my self-confidence. Furthermore, I had the opportunity to visit and get to know better the mentality and peculiarities of each country and thus I was able to compare them to my own. Finally, I was able to visit several places, museums, artworks and attractions that helped me broaden my horizons!

By,

Ioanna Hadjilykou



Erasmus+ D.E.M.O.S. was one of the most amazing, eye opening, fun, experiences of my life. I definitely recommend it to everyone who is considering of participating in it. The whole concept and purpose of this program is not only educational but also to support youth, which is very important. I can confirm this through my personal experience in Bilbao the previous month. The whole week from beginning to end was a memory that I will cherish forever. The activities that were organised by the school were so much fun because we had the opportunity to interact with many teenagers from other countries, learn about their cultures and way of thinking and share ours as well. Bilbao is a very impressive city from its architecture to its people; everybody was so kind and willing to help. I will always keep my host family in my heart because they made me feel included and loved within my short stay. Another reason why I believe it is very important to participate in this kind of programs, is the friendships you make that will last a lifetime, because so many good memories were made with these people that they end up taking up a big part of your heart. If you ever get this chance don't let it go, you will definitely not regret it.

Constantina Anastasiou

Travelling to Bilbao had never crossed my mind before but I'm extremely glad I was given the chance to. Travelling is always exciting but this was one of the most satisfying and educational adventures of my life. Living with a family, made me understand and appreciate the culture deeply in the few days I was there. The way people in Bilbao live is, in a lot of aspects, different from the way of life in Cyprus and the thing that surprised me the most was the amount of people walking around in the mornings. Cypriots use mostly cars and buses for transportation whereas in Bilbao, and many other European countries, people walk almost everywhere.

Through the workshops that were organized and the activities that we as students did every afternoon, we became really good friends with the students and still keep in touch. I loved every single museum and place we visited, especially S. Sebastián. I had the time of my life that entire week but my favourite day was Saturday. In the morning, we took the metro and went to Casco Viejo and had the best waffles I've ever tasted. After walking around for a while, we taught the Spanish students traditional Cypriot dances. At night, we organized a game night at the house I was being hosted. We laughed for hours, ate a lot of food, and took purposely ugly pictures. That was my last night in Bilbao and a memory I will always cherish.

ANTONIA CHRYSOSTOMOU

ERASMUS+: A life-time experience: Hosting students from other countries in Cyprus.

Travelling and getting to know new cultures is undeniably one of the main goals of each person. So, in turn, I had the opportunity to get to know the culture of Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Bulgaria and Italy through the eyes of some children who travelled with the Erasmus program and visited Cyprus.

It was Sunday the 5th of February when a beautiful journey began. I picked up Maria, a girl from Portugal, from the airport and because of her smile I knew everything would be great. It was incredible having Maria staying with us and in the remaining days we got to know each other even better. On Monday, as soon as we arrived at school, we met the children from all countries and started presenting our proposals for a more democratic school while on Tuesday we did some workshops and visited the House of Representatives and the House of Europe. Also, one of my favourite moments at the workshop was with the Eurovision contestants, where each country had an amazing fun.

We spent the rest of the days going on a trip to the old city of Nicosia, Limassol but also to Omodos where we saw how wine is processed. Days passed by with lots of fun, laughter and new acquired knowledge!

During these days, I saw the peace, love and respect we shared among us. We simply enjoyed the moment, taught each other new things and bonded through our shared experiences.

Additionally, one other favourite moment were the afternoons we spent together walking the streets of the city while the songs on the bus that we all sang together happily brought us back to life after an exhausting, long day.

Furthermore, another pleasant moment was when they were trying our food and sometimes they liked it and sometimes they didn't.

All in all, it was definitely one of the best experiences I had at school so far. I met teenagers, like me, having fun without a care in the world. We bonded with each other and proved that peace and similarities exist among people all over the world even though we may not be able to see them. It was truly an unforgettable "Lifetime Experience"!!!

Maria Kyrmizi, C1.

Erasmus+ D.E.M.O.S. WEEK

First of all, who wouldn't love a week full of joy and fun and most of all, being free from classes? I personally believe that no one would say no. But, the Erasmus+ D.E.M.O.S. Week was nothing like that since I made new friends, met new cultures, and learned some words and sentences in foreign languages and many other things.

To begin with, I hosted two boys from Italy, with whom I have kept in touch until now. I practiced my Italian with them and also I learned to speak the Roman dialect. Finally, I came into contact with other children when we met at school the next day.

Also, moments, when we all went out together every night and had a good time, dancing and singing, will always be treasured. However, I must admit that the only time I felt bad was on the last night at the student and faculty dinner before my new friends leave where I knew I wouldn't see them again but at least we would keep in touch through a social media group we made.

I believe that week was the best week of my life, so far. I would love to relive it. All these are experiences that I will remember for the rest of my life.

Giorgos Pahitas, Terra Santa College Student, Class C1.

My Erasmus Experience.

February, 2023, Nicosia, Erasmus + D.E.M.O.S

Initially, when the school announced that we would have the opportunity to host a child from another country taking part in the Erasmus program, I did not pay much attention. I thought it would just be a silly program and a waste of time. But something told me that I should volunteer and get out of my comfort zone. So I did it...

Finally, after some time, only a few days had left until the guys from the Erasmus program would arrive and I had already contacted Joao from Portugal since she was the one I would host. She had never been to Cyprus before so she was quite excited. Even though she is two years older than me, we had a lot in common, so I knew we'd get along great!

At first, I was a bit nervous to meet her in person but after a while talking to her, I realized that there was no reason to be nervous and that the next week will go smoothly. Then, we went to the city center, ate and admired the beauty of the city.

As the days went by, the more I enjoyed spending time with everyone taking part in the Erasmus. I came into contact with new cultures, customs and traditions from many countries. During these days, we saw many parts of Cyprus, ate, drank, laughed, danced and everything else you can imagine. Overall, we all bonded a lot with each other and it's an experience worth the while and I will definitely do it again when I get the chance.

Finally, saying goodbye was the hardest part of this experience. Feelings were mixed since I was sad that they would leave. Maybe, in some years, we will meet again.

Manolis Andriellou C1.



A trip to Portugal... Our students' impressions

Bom dia!

It is a fact that travelling is the most important source of broadening one's spiritual horizon!

Last week, we experienced this concept with the school and the Erasmus+ programme in Portugal. We looked forward to meeting a welcoming world in which we would feel safe and secure and our trip was indeed like that! This was a relief for us and our families. We were impressed by the architecture in the city of Lisbon, their traditional food, the easy and modern means of transport and how open the people there were. We were also impressed by the green spaces that Portugal has as well as the cleanliness in every public space. The people were cheerful, willing to help us and smiling! We definitely made lifelong friendships!

The Erasmus+ programme gave us the opportunity to broaden our horizons, socialise and learn about the way of life and thinking of the Portuguese people. We would like to thank Terra Santa College and Erasmus+ for giving us this opportunity of a lifetime! Obrigado!

Manolis Andrielos - Andrea Ahha - Maria Kyrmizi

Terra Santa College third grade students

Our visit to Portugal with the Erasmus+ programme was definitely an unforgettable experience. It is worth mentioning the fact that at first I did not think I would have a good time, because I thought Portugal was a country that was not that impressive. I also thought I would not like their food. But once I arrived in Portugal I realised that these were all stereotypes that many people believe but they do not correspond to reality!

Initially, I was expecting to go to a small town with nothing spectacular. Instead I went to a town very close to art. The whole town was decorated with different kinds of art, as well as impressive graffiti oriented towards art rather than vandalism. The food was just as nice. The foods I have tried that I would like to learn to make are Pica-Pau and of course the best dessert I ever tasted was pastel de Nata.

What made the biggest impression on me though were their attractions. In my opinion, the most impressive was the Quintada Regaleira castle, an impressive castle that makes you think you are in a fairy tale. Another place we visited that was imprinted in my memory was the Parliament because I never thought that a building can hide so much history. Finally, the people were very welcoming; they all treated me very well and didn't let me miss a thing. Everyone was friendly and welcoming to us.



In conclusion, from this trip I was left with not only the experiences and friendships I made but also a moral lesson that I will remember for the rest of my life, which you should never believe in the stereotypes that some people set and that you should never have negative opinions about something that you have never experienced!

John Pahita

When we landed in Portugal we were very excited. We expected to meet new people, a different culture and generally a different way of life than we had known so far. We were also looking forward to tasting seafood tapioca, which we had read so many positive reviews online before our trip. These were the initial ideas we had for Portugal and after a week all of these were confirmed.

The differences with Cyprus are many. People were much more carefree, calm, happy and content with very simple experiences. For example, when we went to the park to play football we met other kids, became a group and left all happy. Another thing we realized is how independent the teenagers there are. They didn't wait for parents to take them somewhere; they took means of transport like trains, buses and the ferry on their own and managed to get to their destination safely, without stress.

The places we visited were amazing and beautiful. The Quintada Regaleira which is an ancient huge house surrounded by a forest built in Sintra, a city 30 minutes from Lisbon impressed me. Another very special place is the Pastel de Belem bakery in Lisbon which was built in 1837 and serves the delicious traditional Portuguese pastry Pastel de Nata. It is made with the same ancient recipe and with exactly the same equipment.

Finally, their traditional dishes had a lot of fish since Portugal is famous for fresh seafood in its cuisine. One day the mother of the child who was showing me around made a squid soup that was delicious and I would have loved to eat it. The child who was showing me around was very nice and we had a lot in common and same interests. Every day, we joked around and laughed, played football and went for walks around town.

That was our amazing time in Portugal. We went to many cities, did many activities and it is a trip that I will definitely never forget. Portugal is a country I would definitely like to visit again in the future.

Nikitas Psaras



AGRUPAMENTO DE ESCOLAS DE CASQUILHOS EM BILBAU

O quinto intercâmbio de alunos do projeto Erasmus+ “D.E.M.O.S - Democraticthinking in Education as a Medium to Overturn prejudices and Stereotypes”, no qual participaram três professores e cinco alunas da Escola Secundária de Casquilhos, realizou-se em Bilbao, no País Basco, Espanha, de 26 março a 1 de abril. Esta atividade permitiu constatar que são indescritíveis a magnitude e a diversidade desta região do norte de Espanha. De facto, este fragmento do globo compreende uma multiplicidade de estruturas e de eventos, destacando-se pela inimaginável beleza, harmoniosamente integradas nas diversas vertentes, cultural, arquitetónica, paisagística e artística.

Durante este intercâmbio, foi possível vivenciar inúmeras experiências, conhecer e visitar não só a cidade de Bilbao como também outras cidades e locais turísticos de um incalculável prestígio paisagístico e cultural.



Todos os participantes tiveram, igualmente, a oportunidade de explorar, de um modo pessoal e interativo, as diversas dinâmicas organizadas pelos vários países parceiros – Bélgica, Bulgária, Chipre, Espanha, Itália e Portugal.



Através de atividades de integração interpessoal, como *workshops* de exploração de idiomas, apresentações sobre o contributo da União Europeia para o reforço dos valores democráticos nos seis países da parceria, assim como atividades de caráter cultural, destacando-se as visitas ao Museu da Ciência “Eureka”, ao Museu Guggenheim e ao Museu de Reproduções de Bilbao, os alunos experienciaram uma semana repleta de vivências propícias ao seu desenvolvimento.



Um dos pontos altos deste intercâmbio foi, indubitavelmente, a visita a San Juan de Gaztelugatxe, um local dotado de uma beleza natural extraordinária, situado entre os aglomerados rochosos e o mar. Igualmente importantes para o conhecimento da história e das vivências do País Basco foram as visitas às cidades de San Sebastian e, particularmente, Guernica, cujo bombardeamento durante a Guerra Civil Espanhola serviu de inspiração para uma das mais famosas pinturas de Pablo Picasso.



É ainda importante referir a influência intercultural que ocorreu durante esta experiência, nomeadamente através de dinâmicas entre os participantes, como jogos, danças regionais e *workshops*, que proporcionaram uma multiplicidade de interações entre todos os estudantes das diferentes nações e respetivos educadores.

Seguramente, esta foi uma experiência absolutamente inesquecível para todos os participantes, pois contribuiu significativamente para o desenvolvimento de inúmeras competências, complementando a experiência académica com a vivência prática de exploração de culturas e costumes. A convergência destes fatores resulta no estímulo das capacidades intelectuais, dos valores socioculturais e da independência dos alunos, influenciando beneficentemente o seu trajeto enquanto indivíduos.

Carolina Algarvio
Daniela Soares
Lara Gomes
Luana Almeida
Mariana Correia

AECASQUILHOS NA ÚLTIMA CAPITAL DIVIDIDA DA EUROPA: NICÓSIA

De 5 a 11 de fevereiro, cinco alunos, de diferentes cursos e anos de escolaridade, acompanhados por duas professoras da Escola Secundária de Casquilhos, participaram no quarto intercâmbio de alunos do projeto “D.E.M.O.S - Democratic thinking in Education as a Medium to Overturn prejudices and Stereotypes”.

O destino da semana, dedicada a aprofundar aprendizagens sobre a importância dos valores democráticos na construção de uma sociedade mais justa e igualitária, foi Nicósia, no Chipre. Durante este período, jovens de seis países europeus – Bélgica, Bulgária, Chipre, Espanha, Itália e Portugal – desenvolveram os seus conhecimentos sobre a história da democracia cipriota e partilharam experiências acerca da vivência democrática nos seus países, em particular, no contexto escolar. No primeiro dia, realizou-se um *workshop* sobre a língua grega e a sua influência nas outras línguas, assim como foram dinamizadas apresentações nacionais subordinadas ao tema “A cultura democrática num contexto educacional moderno e multicultural”. Por último, visitou-se a Casa da União Europeia, local onde foram abordados assuntos como a história da União Europeia, os objetivos da sua fundação, para além de terem sido caracterizadas as suas principais instituições e organismos.



Dois *workshops*, um de música e outro de arte, uma visita ao Parlamento cipriota e apresentações de temas do Festival Eurovisão da Canção, preparadas pelos alunos de cada país participante, foram as atividades que enriqueceram o segundo dia.

Por fim, dedicaram-se os três últimos dias a aprofundar conhecimentos sobre a história/cultura do Chipre.



Em Nicósia, visitaram-se diversos locais de interesse, como museus; o *Monumento da Liberdade*, erguido em 1973, em homenagem aos lutadores antibritânicos EOKA (“Organização Nacional de Lutadores Cipriotas”); o Portão Famagusta, o Aqueduto, entre outros. Destaca-se, inesperadamente, a “linha verde” que divide a cidade, correspondendo a parte turca ao norte e a parte grega ao sul. Explorou-se, igualmente, a vila de Omodos, assim como o *Anfiteatro Antigo de Kourion* e o *Santuário de Apollo Hylates*, em Limassol.



Ao longo da semana, os alunos puderam ainda conviver nos períodos de passeios, de jantares e de lanches combinados entre si, fortalecendo, desta forma, as amizades entretanto iniciadas.

Os dias esgotaram-se e o regresso a Portugal tornou-se inevitável. A parte mais difícil para os participantes chegara, a hora de se despedirem daqueles que 2

ficarão para sempre nas suas memórias, em especial das famílias que os acolheram e lhes proporcionaram uma vivência mais profunda e enriquecedora da sua cultura e do seu modo de vida. Esta foi, sem dúvida, uma semana repleta de emoções e de novas aprendizagens e descobertas, tendo saído reforçadas as competências necessárias ao exercício uma cidadania ativa e participativa, assente no respeito pelos direitos humanos, nomeadamente os valores da igualdade, da democracia e da justiça social.

Armanda Andrade

Gabriel Feijão

João Santos

Margarida Caeiro

Maria Carolina Tomaz



BARREIRO – ESCOLA SECUNDÁRIA DE CASQUILHOS EM ROMA, ITÁLIA
PROJETO ERASMUS+ “D.E.M.O.S”

O programa Erasmus+ é um exemplo perfeito do tipo de experiência que é apenas compreendida quando vivenciada.

São evidentes e inegáveis as vantagens inerentes a este programa, principalmente quando conjugadas com a prática académica e a dinâmica presente na experiência, associadas ao contexto cultural nele inserido.

O programa Erasmus+ surge como uma alternativa ao ensino tradicional, introduzindo a oportunidade de desenvolver uma multiplicidade de aptidões e competências de um modo exponencialmente mais eficaz, manifestando-se nomeadamente na prática e no aperfeiçoamento da língua inglesa, bem como na oportunidade de conhecer não unicamente a cultura do país visitado como também, de um modo parcial, algumas particularidades dos outros países intervenientes.



É ainda importante referir a consolidação que este programa favorece, no domínio do desenvolvimento pessoal, tendo a capacidade de proporcionar aos alunos (especialmente nesta faixa etária) a solidificação de valores como a independência e a abertura de perspetivas em relação ao exterior.



Neste sentido, o terceiro intercâmbio de alunos do projeto Erasmus+ “D.E.M.O.S - Democratic thinking in Education as a Medium to Overturn prejudices and Stereotypes”, que se realizou em Roma, de 21 a 25 de novembro, potencializou o sentido diligente e o espírito crítico dos jovens participantes dos seis países da parceria – Bélgica, Bulgária, Chipre, Espanha, Itália e Portugal – através do desenvolvimento de atividades académicas, destacando-se a palestra conduzida por um

refugiado afegão e os *workshops* sobre igualdade e direitos civis, bem como de atividades culturais, sendo alguns exemplos as visitas guiadas a diversos museus e monumentos significativamente importantes no contexto histórico da cidade de Roma, como o Coliseu, o Fórum Romano e o Museu Shoah. Foram igualmente visitados outros locais emblemáticos como o Panteão, os Museus do Vaticano, a Basílica de São Pedro, os Museus Capitolinos, a Praça de Espanha, a Praça Navona, a Praça do Povo e a Fonte de Trevi. As atividades desenvolvidas, a par do convívio entre jovens oriundos de seis países europeus, foram experiências absolutamente fascinantes e enriquecedoras para todos os participantes.



O Programa Erasmus+ constitui, indubitavelmente, uma experiência repleta de oportunidades que pode funcionar como uma ferramenta que os jovens podem utilizar a seu favor de modo a evoluir individual e coletivamente.

Bruna Navalho
Daniela Nascimento
Filipa Vilar
Lara Gomes
Lara Gonçalves



UMA VIAGEM INESQUECÍVEL E ENRIQUECEDORA À BULGÁRIA

Entre 2 e 8 de outubro, quatro alunos e dois professores representaram a Escola Secundária de Casquilhos no segundo intercâmbio de alunos do projeto Erasmus+ D.E.M.O.S, cuja finalidade é utilizar o pensamento democrático na educação, como meio de ultrapassar preconceitos e estereótipos.

O encontro realizou-se, desta vez, na cidade de Sófia, capital da Bulgária, contando com o envolvimento do país anfitrião e de mais cinco países (Bélgica, Chipre, Espanha, Itália e Portugal).



Sendo a nossa primeira participação num projeto desta relevância e, ademais, no estrangeiro, era natural que a expectativa e o contentamento fossem os sentimentos dominantes. Integrar um intercâmbio foi algo que sempre desejamos, procurando, dessa forma, conhecer outras culturas, línguas, cidades e monumentos, em benefício do nosso desenvolvimento cognitivo e social. Como era de esperar, o projeto constituiu uma experiência bastante enriquecedora, que, certamente, se revelará de extrema importância no nosso futuro. Dadas as circunstâncias contextuais, não foi possível ficarmos alojados em casas de alunos búlgaros, como era habitual nos anos anteriores à pandemia. Todos consideramos que se tivesse sido possível coabitar com eles, mesmo que apenas por uns dias, e assim fazer parte das suas rotinas diárias e habituais, teria sido ainda mais profunda a perceção do seu estilo de vida.



Relativamente às atividades desenvolvidas no âmbito do projeto D.E.M.O.S e no que respeita à exploração da cidade de Sófia, consideramos que foram muito interessantes e enriquecedores os conhecimentos adquiridos e as práticas realizadas, que envolveram o uso de novas tecnologias, experiência sempre cativante.

Na escola que nos acolheu, fomos surpreendidos com excelentes condições, desde cadeiras almofadadas, quadros interativos móveis, salas com enormes dimensões e, inclusive, espaços equipados com tecnologia moderna, que permitiam realizar diversas atividades, tais como, dança, cinema e teatro, e, ainda, aprender várias línguas estrangeiras (árabe, mandarim, coreano, francês, alemão, entre outras). No exterior dos edifícios, existe uma enorme quantidade de espaços verdes dos quais os alunos podem desfrutar durante os intervalos. Através de jogos, atividades e visitas guiadas pelos alunos búlgaros, pudemos explorar e conhecer as principais atrações e pontos de interesse de Sófia. Visitamos diversos monumentos, tendo sido explicada a história e a origem da capital da Bulgária, assim como explicitada a representação do Parlamento Europeu neste país.



No dia 5 de outubro, visitamos a cidade de Plovdiv, Capital Europeia da Cultura em 2019. Este dia foi magnífico, não só pela visita a esta belíssima cidade, repleta de belos monumentos, que além de históricos eram bastante imponentes e muito bem conservados, mas também pela partilha de imensas histórias sobre esta localidade, efetuada por guias turísticos, vivência que contribuiu efetivamente para conhecermos um pouco mais da história da Bulgária.

Esta inesquecível semana, concluiu-se com a muito esperada apresentação dos projetos elaborados pelas diversas delegações de alunos. O nosso projeto refletiu o conjunto de programas existentes na nossa escola, dedicados a diversas temáticas como a preservação do planeta e o apoio social à comunidade.

Foi com muita nostalgia que nos despedimos dos nossos novos amigos, na certeza, porém, de termos ficado com extraordinárias memórias desta incrível semana e, ainda, com o sentimento de dever cumprido por termos representado, com todo o empenho e dedicação, a nossa escola e o nosso país.

*André Gomes
João Gomes
Hugo Pacheco
Rodrigo Cruz*

PROJETO ERASMUS+ D.E.M.O.S EM TERVÛREN, BÉLGICA

Quando um avião parte, que nem as asas de um pássaro, vai sempre em busca de um destino. Foi o que aconteceu na semana de 24 a 30 de abril, em que quatro alunos do 10º Ano da *Escola Secundária de Casquilhos*, acompanhados por três professores, partiram até Tervuren, localidade situada junto a Bruxelas, na Bélgica, no primeiro intercâmbio de alunos no âmbito do Projeto Erasmus+ “Democratic thinking in Education as a Medium to Overturn prejudices and Stereotypes” (D.E.M.O.S.).



Chegados à terra do chocolate, da cerveja, das batatas fritas, das *waffles*, do Tintin, dos Estrunfes, de Magritte e de tantas outras maravilhas, logo cada elemento do grupo de alunos foi acolhido num lar, na companhia da família do estudante belga que seria, durante toda a semana, o cicerone principal de cada um dos estudantes portugueses. Mas se a cultura belga esteve no centro de todas as atenções, certo é que outras diferentes culturas estiveram presentes, já que o projeto envolveu alunos de outros países: Chipre, Bulgária, Espanha e Itália.



Durante a semana houve diversas atividades culturais, tais como a visita a Bruxelas, Bruges e Leuven. Em Bruxelas visitou-se o Parlamento Europeu onde, através de um jogo de “role-play”, se pôde experienciar o trabalho de um representante do Parlamento Europeu durante uma manhã. Com a divisão do grupo em diferentes partidos, com diversas escalas de poder, foi

confiada uma tarefa a cada um, com o objetivo de se chegar a um acordo em relação a várias propostas apresentadas; isto revelou ser bastante desafiante, devido à diferença de ideais entre os partidos, o que tornou muito difícil a chegada a um acordo/consenso. No entanto, apesar das dificuldades enfrentadas, conseguiu-se aproveitar esta educativa experiência. Como mencionado anteriormente, este projeto foi uma incrível oportunidade de aprendizagem e de consciencialização para o facto de os representantes políticos, por vezes, terem de percorrer um longo percurso até à tomada da decisão final, pois o chegar a uma decisão nem sempre é fácil, já que são inúmeras as variáveis a ter em atenção.



No último dia, para além da continuação do trabalho iniciado dias antes na escola anfitriã, visitou-se o Museu Real da África Central, que conta a história política e colonial entre a Bélgica e a República Democrática do Congo. É aqui colocado o foco na parte cruel da história que, ao longo de muitos anos, se procurou omitir. Só nos últimos 50 anos se começou a dar a conhecer, sobretudo no próprio ensino da História, que nem tudo o que a Bélgica fez na República Democrática do Congo foi da forma mais correta. Antes deste período recente pensava-se que a Bélgica tinha trazido paz, prosperidade e riqueza àquele país. Hoje sabe-se que os belgas levaram consigo guerra, pobreza e destruição. Com a participação neste intercâmbio conseguiu-se abrir horizontes, percebendo-se o papel importante que cada um deve ter na sociedade, para que esta seja cada vez mais livre, democrática e pensante. Aliás, já René Magritte o procurava fazer com as suas pinturas há várias décadas. A propósito da pintura de um cachimbo, afirmava ele “Ceci n'est pas une pipe”.

Bruna Navalho
Rodrigo Costa
Tiago Caldeira
Vasco Correia



ERASMUS+ DEMOS

The Italian way...

Although there was some degree of delay, because of the Covid emergency in Europe, the Erasmus+ DEMOS project exploring the concept of democracy, made a start. The first task, in which some of our participant students from the six partner countries were involved, was the making of prototypes of logo, which were then voted by the whole of the DEMOS community on a poll platform in order to choose the official image for our project.

Our students Flaminia Pozzi, Marina Todini and Federico Terrini (3G) created two digital logo prototypes which received a good number of votes:

1. The six people stand for the six partner countries: different colours because we have different backgrounds and we are far apart, but we are sitting around a table to discuss and interact to find out about and appreciate each other's diversities.



2. The two people hugging the world stand for the participants in the project and their desire to get to know and understand each other as well as appreciate each other's cultures and democratic traditions. Democracy is a value to protect. The white clouds remind us that we will have to cross the skies of Europe to achieve this.



The winning logo:



BELGIUM:

After a prolonged pause, dictated by the Covid emergency, the DEMOS project has finally started. The National Agency of the organizing school (Ciprus) has granted an extension of 12 months to complete the planned activities by May 2023 in Portugal. The first exchange mobility took place in Tervuren, Belgium, from 25th to 29th April. Chiara Nicoletti and Flaminia Pozzi (4G) and Carlotta Bucci and Chiara Marinetti (4E), accompanied by teachers Anna Abate and Andrea Basini, participated in the mobility. The girls were hosted by families of fellow girl students from the partner school, interacting in English for the whole time and generally joining in the everyday life of a typical Belgian family.



The rich program included the visits to the Belvue Museum and the European Parliament, a trip to historical medieval centre of Bruges, the visit to Groeningemuseum, to the Red Star Line Museum for Central Africa, as well as activities aimed at the implementation of the project's topic and social events at school and outside school, shared with students from all partner schools involved in the project, for the purpose of developing a common European identity. Feedback on the experience from our students was very positive. A fruitful exchange of good practices was likewise carried out by our teachers.



BULGARIA

The second exchange mobility of the Demos project took place in Sophia (Bulgaria) from 2nd to 8th October 2022. A delegation formed by teachers Anna Abate and Rossella Dardo and students Emma Angelozzi and Sara Torlone from 5H e Federica Bucci, Elisa Catalano e Federico Tonnarini from 5I. The program devised by the guest school, 18th School William Gladstone, included the participation in language and culture labs (Chinese, Arab and Japanese) as well as workshops and group activities, like quizzes and games, focused on the concepts of democracy and education, guided tours of the cities of Sophia with scavenger hunt and of Plovdiv, European capital of Culture 2019. Particularly remarkable the visit to the Basilica of Philippopolis, with its stunning mosaics, and the Roman theatre. Our students worked on a presentation on the topic of community services active at our school, illustrating the campaign of blood donation and the ecology days of the green areas of Liceo Pasteur. Partner countries involved were, besides the host country Bulgaria, Belgium, Cyprus, Portugal and Spain.

La docente referente
Rossella Dardo

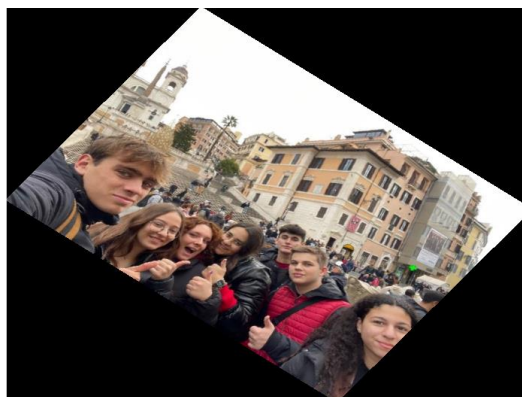


ITALY:

In the week between the 21st and the 25th November 2022, our school hosted the third student exchange event in the Erasmus + Demos project. A total of 32 people, teachers and students, from our five partner countries (Heilig Hartcollege from Tervuren (Belgium), 18th High School William Gladstone from Sofia (Bulgaria), Terra Santa College from Nicosia (Cipro), IES Miguel de Unamuno from Bilbao (Spain) and Agrupamento de Escolas de Casquilhos from Barreiro (Portugal) were welcomed by our team and participant students and were engaged in the activities included in the fun packed program, focused on the topics of democracy and civil rights.



The program included, on the first day, following a short welcome ceremony, a series of presentations delivered by the students on the topic of state and school democracy in the different countries, next a presentation on the Stoplesteine project and finally a seminar by Fondazione Astalli, an organization that deals with civil rights; a young Afghan refugee who fled his country under Taliban regime was a guest talk, he shared his experience and replied to the students' questions. In the afternoon a visit to the Capitolini Museums.



On the second day, the teams visited an anti-violence center where they took part in workshop on the theme of violence on women. In the afternoon, back to school, they familiarized with the app to be used in the scavenger hunt in the center.

On the Wednesday guided tour of the Colosseum, Forums and Jewish ghetto with Shoah museum. The following day was devoted to indoor workshops in Latin and Art, followed by the rehearsal of the choreography devised for the flash mob of the flowing day. On Friday 25th in the morning, our students, each wearing a red item of clothing, acted out their flash mob in the center of Rome on the day which internationally celebrates the struggle to violence on women. After that, a scavenger hunt exploring the sites and monuments of democracy in Rome.



Numerous occasions of socialization made it possible to reinforce the professional, cultural and human bond among European students and teachers alike, in the spirit of this and all Erasmus projects.



CYPRUS:

During the week from the 4th to the 11th February 2023, our school took part in the fourth mobility within the DEMOS Project. Terra Santa College in Nicosia (Cyprus) welcomed the Italian delegation formed by the teachers Rossella Dardo and Andrea Basini and four students: Andrea Castellucci and Edoardo De Montis from 5C and Mattia Novelli and Federico Terrini from 5G. Our students were generously hosted by families of fellow Cypriot students, a particularly enriching experience which allowed them to strengthen their language abilities and develop their personal skills of adaptation and resilience, through a full immersion into the local culture and the numerous opportunities for communication and socialization. Our students consolidated their awareness of a shared European identity and their understanding of another country. The programme of activities, planned by the Cypriot Erasmus team and aimed at soliciting a reflection upon the topic of democracy with a special emphasis on the issue of the struggle for democracy and civil rights in particular, was very rich. Our students delivered a presentation on the 'students' week' at Pasteur, as an example of students' democratic participation to school life.



The programme for the different teams included: a visit to House of the European Union and the Cypriot Headquarters for the European Parliament, a guided tour of the old town, a visit to the monument for the victims of the Turkish-Cypriot War and the fallen in the struggle for political independence against the British rule, a visit to the ancient Kourion amphitheatre and to the city of Limassol, a visit to the monastery of Timios Stavros and to the memorial for democracy in the historical village of Omodos, as well a workshop on the Greek language and other laboratories plus an ice-breaking activity where our students' singing performance was particularly successful, the latter ones realized at the school; one touching moment was when the group took part in the rehearsal of the System Cyprus orchestra, formed by children from families affected by social and economical difficulties.



Also for the teachers involved this was a precious opportunity for personal and professional self-development thanks to the exchange of good practices and the familiarization with a different educational system, consistent with a wider process of internationalization for our school.



BILBAO:

During the week from the 27th to the 31st March 2023, a delegation of Liceo Pasteur, formed by the teachers Rossella Dardo and Antonella Leoni and the students Cristiano Ricciardi (5D), Simona Olivari (5C) and Matilde Fortinelli and Marina Todini (5G), took part in the fifth exchange mobility within the Project DEMOS, hosted by our Spanish partner school IES Miguel de Unamuno BHI in Bilbao.

The program included, on the first day, a number of ice-breaking activities: a cultural performance by each team of students and the international breakfast with typical dishes prepared by the students from the vocational classes of the partner school; next, students joined a kajaking activity on the river Nervion. The rest of the day was devoted to the exploration of the city and of its surroundings.



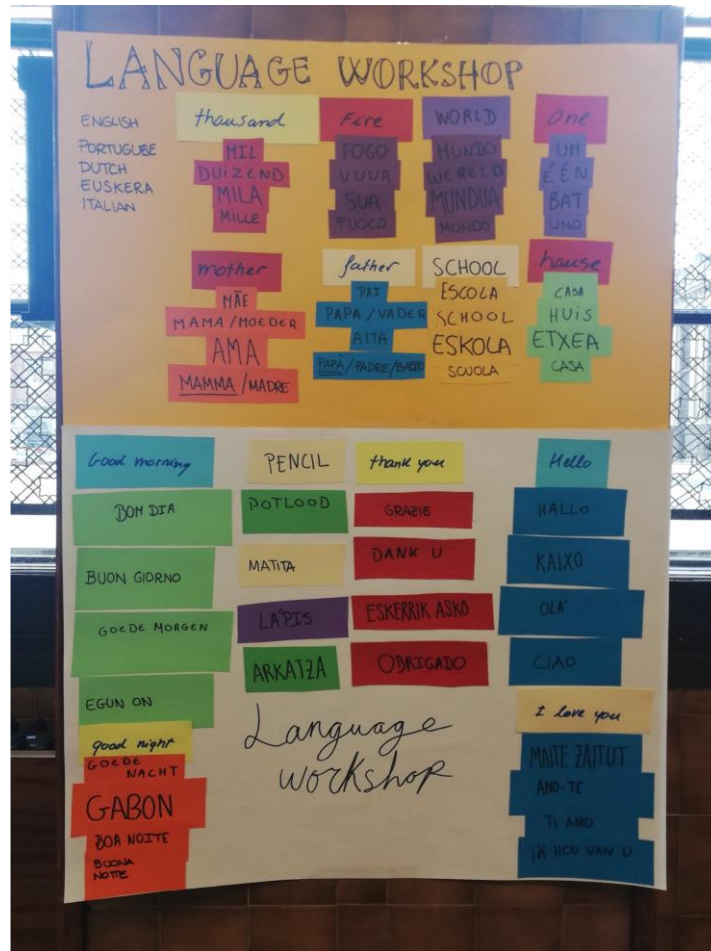
On the second day, each team delivered a presentation on the theme 'The EU and the democratic values'; our students focused in particular on the phenomenon of illegal immigration by sea. A trip to Mount Artxanda via a funicular followed, which allowed us to enjoy a stunning view of the city. In the afternoon the teams visited the Guggenheim Museum and its fantastic contemporary art exhibitions.

On the third day, we drove to the city of San Sebastian, another important center in the Basque region. Here, the students, grouped in international teams, took part in a photographic scavenger hunt of the most representative sites and monuments. We then visited the Science Museum Eureka as well as the Planetarium and took part in a workshop.



On the following day, we drove to the breathtaking location of San Juan de Gaztelugatxe and climbed up the hill to visit a medieval church. We then drove to the town of Guernika where we received a guided tour of the Assembly House which houses the Basque Parliament as well as of the Museum devoted to the bombing; these represented an occasion to learn about the Basque struggle for autonomy.

The fifth and final day of activities started off with the closing ceremony with the members of the winning international team being awarded with a medal; a visit (with lecture on body stereotypes and fashion) to the local Museum of Artistic Reproductions followed in the afternoon and, back to school, students enjoy a tasting of the typical 'pintxos' and were engaged in two laboratories on Basque language and dances.



Several were the occasions for students and teachers alike to enjoy the company of their local counterparts. Particularly valuable, for the accompanying teachers, was the visit to the premises of the host school, which is peculiar in that it is totally financed by the Basque government and offers a curriculum which is entirely delivered in the Basque language.



PORTUGAL:

The sixth and final international exchange mobility within the Erasmus + Project DEMOS took place in Portugal, in Barreiro, a small town twenty minutes from Lisbon by ferry.

The teachers Rossella Dardo and Loredana Vozzi accompanied students Luca Campeti and John Orcullo (5G) and Alessia Cristofaro (4H) who joined an intense activity program in English devised by secondary school Agrupamento de Escolas de Casquilhos (surprisingly similar to our Liceo!) during the week from 8th to 12th May 2023.

On the first day, following the welcome ceremony and a tour around the school, the students from the six partner countries were sorted into mixed groups and made to work on the first ice-breaking activity. Students were asked to realize art works which could represent them and be used as a starting point to introduce to others and talk about themselves. After a snack, students took part in a workshop aimed at ultimately produce an idea for a Netflix-type series, which would be centered on a crucial event in the democratic history of a European country. The activity was completed and presented in the afternoon. The free evening was devoted to the interaction of teachers and students alike; the local partners made a special effort to arrange events, short trips and social occasions every single day of the week.



On the second day, we visited Lisbon and specifically Jeronimos Monastery, the Tower of Belem and the Monument of Discoveries; a stop was made at the nearby landmark cake shop to taste the famous custard cream tart. We then embarked on an exploration of the city's charming historical center.

The following day all scheduled activities took place at school: students devised projects addressed to the local or school community tackling current social issues. Following a lunch break, some of the students joined a drum session; some went to a nearby school where they acted like judges in a cake

competition where the theme was the European Union. Teachers held a meeting to discuss and define the final steps of the project.



On the fourth day, the teams visited some locations in the vicinity of Lisbon: the windy and dramatic Roca Cape (the most western point in Europe, overlooking the ocean) and Sintra, a lovely village famous for the Quinta da Regaleira estate with its luxuriant gardens and the magnificent National Palace, once residence of the Portuguese royal family.



On our last day we visited the Industrial Museum Baia do Tejo where the Portuguese students illustrated the history of their country's industrial development; we then headed back to Lisbon where we were offered a guided tour of the Parliament and a visit to the house of Fernando Pessoa.

It was an emotional final exchange, marking the end of a long and somehow difficult journey (delayed by the Covid 19 health emergency), though successful and enriching for all those who have taken part. Till next Erasmus + project!





D.E.M.O.S. project -Mobility in Belgium

D.E.M.O.S. Erasmus+ project, *Democratic thinking in Education as a Medium to Overturn prejudices and Stereotypes*, played a pivotal role in shaping the objectives of our Erasmus mobility program at **Heilig Hartcollege (Tervuren)**. This project aimed to foster awareness of our European identity among participating students while promoting strategies for socialization and equality. As a result, we, the students from IES Miguel de Unamuno, experienced significant growth in various areas.

One of the key objectives of the project was to enhance our cultural competences, particularly in terms of history, art, and civilization of our partner countries. Throughout our journey, we had the privilege of exploring the rich cultural heritage of Belgium, deepening our understanding of its history and civilization. We visited museums, immersed ourselves in local traditions, and engaged in meaningful conversations with our Belgian counterparts, expanding our cultural horizons.

Language skills in modern languages, particularly English and the languages of the participating countries, were another important focus of the project. As we interacted with students from Belgium, we not only improved our English proficiency but also had the opportunity to practice and enhance our language skills in Spanish and other languages. The multicultural and multilingual environment provided us with a platform to communicate effectively and appreciate linguistic diversity.

In today's digital age, digital competence is of utmost importance. The D.E.M.O.S. project recognized this and encouraged us to develop our digital skills in various areas, such as information search, cooperation, communication, and content creation. During our time in Belgium, we utilized digital tools and platforms to conduct research, collaborate on project work, and effectively communicate with our peers and teachers. These experiences equipped us with valuable digital competences that will undoubtedly benefit us in our academic and professional journeys.

Another significant aspect of the project was the development of social competence, particularly in accepting and embracing physical, cultural, and linguistic diversity. Through our interactions with Belgian students and immersion in their culture, we learned to appreciate and respect the differences that exist among us. We actively engaged in dialogue, shared our perspectives, and celebrated the diversity that enriches our European identity. This social competence will undoubtedly contribute to creating inclusive and harmonious societies in the future.

Lastly, the D.E.M.O.S. project emphasized the importance of multilingual and multicultural competence. As we connected with students from different countries, we developed a deeper understanding of various cultures and languages. The experience of living with our Belgian host families allowed us to immerse ourselves in their daily lives, customs, and traditions. This firsthand exposure to multiculturalism nurtured our ability to adapt, understand, and navigate diverse environments.

In conclusion, the D.E.M.O.S. project had a profound impact on our Erasmus mobility program at Heilig Hartcollege. Through its objectives of promoting cultural competences, language skills, digital competence, social competence, and multilingual and multicultural competence, we grew both individually and collectively. The project empowered us to challenge stereotypes, appreciate diversity, and embrace our European identity. We are grateful for the opportunities it provided and the lifelong skills it imparted.

Participating in the five-day Erasmus mobility program at Heilig Hartcollege (Tervuren) within the D.E.M.O.S. Erasmus project on participatory democracy was an incredible experience for the students of IES Miguel de Unamuno high school. From the moment we arrived in Belgium on April 24, 2022, we were warmly welcomed by our Belgian host families, who made us feel at home.

On Monday, April 25, we began our journey in Brussels with a visit to the Belvue Museum in the morning. It was an enlightening experience that allowed us to delve into the rich history and culture of Belgium. In the afternoon, we had free time to explore the vibrant city of Brussels at our own pace. The day concluded with us spending the evening with our host families, who shared their customs and traditions with us.



The following day, Tuesday, April 26, was dedicated to exploring the European neighborhood. We started the morning with a visit to the Parliamentarium at the European Parliament, where we gained insights into the workings of the European Union. In the afternoon, we embarked on a guided tour through the captivating streets of Brussels, admiring its stunning architecture and iconic landmarks. Once again, we returned to our host families for a memorable evening.

Wednesday, April 27, was a day filled with exciting activities in Tervuren. In the morning, we were introduced to the school and the project we would be working on. It was an excellent opportunity for us to connect with the Belgian, Bulgarian, Italian, Cypriot and Portuguese students and exchange ideas about participatory democracy. In the afternoon, our Belgian counterparts organized a free activity for us, which allowed us to further bond and learn from each other. We concluded the day by spending the evening with our host families.

Thursday, April 28, presented us with two enticing options: a virtual tour through medieval Bruges or a visit to the Groeningemuseum. Some of us chose to explore the enchanting streets of Bruges through a virtual tour, immersing ourselves in its medieval charm. Others opted to visit the Groeningemuseum, where we marveled at magnificent artworks. Whichever option we chose, the day ended with us returning to our host families, who continued to show us immense hospitality.



On Friday, April 29, our focus shifted back to Tervuren. We began the day with a visit to the Royal Museum for Central Africa, where we delved into the history and culture of Africa. In the afternoon, we dedicated our time to project work and had a meeting to discuss our progress. The day concluded with us spending another evening with our host families, cherishing the connections we had formed.

Sadly, all good things must come to an end. On Saturday, April 30, it was time for the students from IES Miguel de Unamuno to bid farewell to our Belgian hosts. As we packed our bags and prepared for departure, we carried with us cherished memories, newfound knowledge, and lasting friendships.

Participating in the Erasmus mobility program at Heilig Hartcollege (Tervuren) was an unforgettable experience that broadened our horizons, deepened our understanding of participatory democracy, and fostered cultural exchange. We are immensely grateful to the D.E.M.O.S. Erasmus project and everyone involved in making this journey possible. The bonds we formed and the lessons we learned will forever shape our perspective on democracy and international cooperation.

D.E.M.O.S. project -Mobility in Bulgaria

Participating in the five-day Erasmus mobility program at **William Gladstone Comprehensive School** in Sofia, Bulgaria, within the "DEMOS" Erasmus project on participatory democracy was an unforgettable experience for the students of IES Miguel de Unamuno high school. From October 2 to 8, 2022, we had the privilege of immersing ourselves in a diverse and enriching educational journey.

Our adventure began on Sunday, October 2, with our arrival in Sofia. We were greeted with warmth and excitement, setting the tone for the memorable days ahead.



Monday, October 3, commenced with a welcoming ceremony, where we were introduced to our Bulgarian hosts and fellow participants. We then embarked on a school visit, exploring the classrooms and witnessing the Bulgarian education system firsthand. Language class visits allowed us to observe language teaching techniques, while workshops on Korean, Japanese, French, Arabic, and Chinese opened our eyes to the beauty of different cultures.



Tuesday, October 4, was filled with intellectual challenges and creative collaborations. Italian, Spanish, Cypriot, Portuguese, and Belgian students joined forces in a "DEMOS" quiz design workshop, creating engaging quizzes that tested our knowledge of participatory democracy. We also had the opportunity to

engage in a workshop on "Drones in Humanitarian Actions," exploring the innovative use of drones for social good.

On Wednesday, October 5, we embarked on a captivating day trip to Plovdiv, the EU Capital of Culture 2019. The city mesmerized us with its historical monuments and vibrant atmosphere, leaving a lasting impression on our hearts.

Thursday, October 6, brought us an extraordinary opportunity—the official visit to the EU Parliament in Sofia. We gained insights into the inner workings of the European Union and engaged in meaningful discussions with EU representatives. The day continued with the "Tolerance Game," an interactive scavenger hunt that took us through the streets of Sofia, promoting tolerance and understanding. We concluded the day with a delightful lunch at a traditional restaurant, savoring Bulgarian cuisine and strengthening the bonds among all participants.

Friday, October 7, commenced with a workshop on the "360° Education Platform." We explored innovative educational tools and strategies, expanding our horizons and deepening our understanding of modern teaching methods. The day culminated in a closing ceremony, where we celebrated the friendships formed and the knowledge acquired throughout our time in Sofia.



As our Erasmus mobility program came to an end, we bid farewell to Sofia on Saturday, October 8. The experiences we shared, the friendships we forged, and the lessons we learned will forever shape our perspective on participatory democracy and European unity.

We express our heartfelt gratitude to the William Gladstone Comprehensive School, our Bulgarian hosts, and the D.E.M.O.S. Erasmus project for providing us with this invaluable opportunity. We return to Bilbao enriched, inspired, and ready to contribute to building a democratic and inclusive society.



D.E.M.O.S. project -Mobility in Italy

We, four Basque students from Miguel de Unamuno Secondary School in Bilbao, Spain had the incredible opportunity to participate in a five-day mobility in the Roman secondary school **Liceo Scientifico Louis Pasteur** as part of the Erasmus+ project D.E.M.O.S. (*Democratic thinking in Education as a Medium to Overturn prejudices and Stereotypes*). The mobility took place from 21st to 25th November 2022 and included students from Belgium, Portugal, Bulgaria, Cyprus, and ourselves from the Basque Country (Spain).

During our stay in Rome, we had the chance to stay together at the *Sisto V* Hotel, which provided a comfortable and conducive environment for interaction and socialization among all the participating foreign students. Although we missed the opportunity to stay with Italian families, the hotel stay still allowed us to engage with one another and build friendships across different cultures.

Objectives of the D.E.M.O.S. Project: The main objectives of the D.E.M.O.S. project were to promote cultural competences, language skills, digital competence, social competence, and multilingual and multicultural competence. Through our participation in various activities, we aimed to grow both individually and collectively. The project sought to foster awareness of European democracy, while also promoting strategies for socialization and equality. We were empowered to challenge stereotypes, appreciate diversity, and embrace our European identity.

Activities of the Mobility:

Monday 21: Headmasters' welcome and Introduction to the week's agenda. During this session, we were warmly welcomed by the headmasters of Liceo Scientifico Louis Pasteur and given an overview of the activities planned for the week. Each group of students presented their respective national democratic models, both in terms of government and school structures. As Basque students, we presented "[Democratic participation at IES Miguel de Unamuno BHI High School](#)." We also had the opportunity to attend a seminar on migration and civil rights conducted by Fondazione Astalli, with a guest talk by a migrant. This session provided valuable insights into the challenges faced by migrants and their rights within democratic societies. We visited the Musei Capitolini, where we explored the rich history and art of Rome.



Tuesday 22: We attended lectures and participated in workshops focused on women's rights at the Anti-violence Centre. It was an eye-opening experience that highlighted the importance of gender equality and the ongoing struggle for women's rights. We also had a tour of Rome's historical center, which allowed us to appreciate the city's cultural and historical significance. Interactive scavenger hunts were organized, enhancing our teamwork and problem-solving skills.

Wednesday 23: Roman Forums and Coliseum guided tours. Visit to the Museum of Shoah and Jewish ghetto. We embarked on guided tours of the Roman Forums and the Colosseum, where we learned about ancient Roman civilization and the significance of these historical sites. In the afternoon, we visited the Museum of Shoah and the Jewish ghetto, which shed light on the history of the Jewish community in Rome and the atrocities committed during the Holocaust.



Thursday 24: Workshops on Latin and Art. Preparation for Flash mob. We engaged in workshops on Latin and Art, providing us with insights into the classical language, culture and the importance of artistic expression. We also dedicated time to preparing for flash mobs, where we aimed to convey a message of unity, diversity, and equality through choreographed performances.



Friday 25: Flash mobs at Piazza del Popolo. Tours of Rome's historical center. The highlight of our mobility was the flash mob performances at Piazza del Popolo, which attracted the attention of locals and tourists alike. It was a powerful expression of our shared values and the message of the D.E.M.O.S. project. We concluded the mobility with tours of Rome's historical center, allowing us to revisit some of the iconic landmarks and reflect on the experiences we had throughout the week.



Conclusion: The mobility in Rome as part of the D.E.M.O.S. project was an enriching and transformative experience for all of us, the Basque students. We not only achieved the project's objectives of promoting cultural competences and democratic thinking but also developed lasting friendships and a deeper appreciation for the diversity and unity within Europe. The activities we engaged in, the knowledge we gained, and the bonds we formed will continue to shape our understanding of democracy, equality, and European identity for years to come.

D.E.M.O.S. project -Mobility in Cyprus

We, the Basque students from Miguel de Unamuno Secondary School in Bilbao, Spain, had the incredible opportunity to participate in a five-day mobility in the Cypriot secondary school **Terra Santa College** in Nicosia as part of the Erasmus+ project D.E.M.O.S. (*Democratic thinking in Education as a Medium to Overturn prejudices and Stereotypes*). The mobility took place from 6th to 10th February 2023 and included students from Italy, Belgium, Portugal, Bulgaria, Cyprus, and ourselves from the Basque Country.

During our stay in Nicosia, we were fortunate to stay with Cypriot families, which provided a unique opportunity for integration, interaction, and socialization. Living with local families allowed us to immerse ourselves in the Cypriot culture, traditions, and daily life, fostering a deep connection with our host country.

The main objectives of the D.E.M.O.S. project were to promote democratic thinking, challenge stereotypes, and foster cultural understanding and respect. Through our participation in various activities, we aimed to enhance our democratic culture and embrace multiculturalism. The project also aimed to empower us to become active and engaged European citizens.

Activities of the Mobility:

Monday 6: We were warmly welcomed by the headmaster of Terra Santa College, who introduced us to the school environment and facilities. A seminar/workshop on the importance of the Greek language and its influence on other languages in the world was conducted, providing us with valuable insights into language diversity and its impact on our cultural identities. Each team of students presented on the democratic culture in a modern and multicultural educational environment. As Basque students, we presented "*Some tips to get a Democratic culture in a modern school.*" We visited the House of European Union, where we gained a deeper understanding of the European Union and its values.



Tuesday 7: We engaged in an art and music workshop, where we explored various artistic expressions and celebrated our cultural diversity through creative activities. We visited the House of Cypriot Parliament and had a guided tour, deepening our knowledge of the Cypriot political system and

democratic processes. As a bonding activity, we had a show of Eurovision participation songs and each group performed the previous year's Eurovision song from their respective countries. This was one of the most fun and enriching activities.

Wednesday 8: We gathered at the school and embarked on a tour of Nicosia's town center, exploring various historical and cultural landmarks. The tour included visits to the Nicosia old aqueduct, Famagusta gate, Liberty Monument, The House of Hadjigeorgakis Kornesios, Ethnological Museum, Ochi, Green Line, Ledras street, Shacolas Tower Museum and Observatory, and Eleftheria Square. We enjoyed an organized lunch at "Piatsa Gourounaki" and later visited Sistema Cyprus, where we learned about their initiatives in music education and social inclusion.

Thursday 9: We left Nicosia for Limassol and visited the Kourion ancient amphitheater, immersing ourselves in the rich history and architectural marvels of ancient Greece. We also explored the Sanctuary of Apollo Hylates, connecting with the spiritual and cultural heritage of Cyprus.



Friday 10: We visited St. Alexandros Church, which houses the Struggle Museum, providing us with insights into the Cypriot struggle for independence and national identity. A guided tour of the "Oinou Gi" winery introduced us to the local wine production and traditions. We toured the village's museums, including the EOKA museum and museum of culture, further deepening our understanding of Cypriot history and culture. The mobility concluded with a farewell dinner for students and teachers, where we celebrated our shared experiences and bid farewell to our newfound friends.



The mobility in Nicosia as part of the D.E.M.O.S. project was an unforgettable and transformative experience for all of us, the participating students. We achieved the project's objectives of promoting democratic thinking, challenging stereotypes, and fostering cultural understanding. Living with Cypriot families allowed us to truly experience the local culture and build lasting connections. The activities we engaged in, the knowledge we gained, and the friendships we formed will continue to shape our perspectives on democracy, cultural diversity, and European citizenship. We are grateful for the opportunity to be part of the D.E.M.O.S. project and contribute to building a more inclusive and democratic society.





D.E.M.O.S. project -Mobility in Portugal

Five students from Miguel de Unamuno Secondary School in Bilbao, Basque Country (Spain), were fortunate to take part in a five-day mobility within the Erasmus+ project D.E.M.O.S. Our destination was the Portuguese secondary school **Agrupamento de Escolas de Casquilhos** in Barreiro (Portugal). This memorable experience occurred from 8th to 12th May 2023 and involved students from Italy, Belgium, Portugal, Bulgaria, Cyprus, and ourselves from Basque Country.

During our stay in Barreiro, we had the valuable opportunity to reside with Portuguese families, which granted us an authentic and immersive cultural experience. This arrangement allowed us to fully immerse ourselves in Portuguese society, enhance our language skills, and forge meaningful connections with our host families. The warm hospitality extended to us fostered a deep appreciation for Portuguese culture and strengthened our bonds with the local community.

The main objectives of the D.E.M.O.S. project were to promote democratic thinking, challenge stereotypes, and foster cultural understanding and respect. Through our participation in various activities, we aimed to develop a democratic mindset and appreciation for diversity. The project also aimed to empower us to become active and engaged European citizens.

Activities of the Mobility:

Monday 8: Welcoming partners, Art Activity, School Tour, and Netflix Series Workshop. We were warmly welcomed by our Portuguese partners and introduced to the school and its facilities. We engaged in an Art Activity, allowing us to express our creativity and collaborate with students from different countries. The School Tour familiarized us with the campus and its resources. We participated in a workshop focused on Netflix Series, discussing their influence on society and presenting our conclusions and recommendations.



Tuesday 9: Cultural trip to Lisbon. We embarked on a cultural trip to Lisbon, starting with a visit to Belém, where we explored the Monastery of Jerónimos, the Tower of Belém, and the Monument to the Discoveries. We indulged in the famous "Pastéis de Belém," experiencing the delight of Portuguese custard tarts. In downtown Lisbon, we enjoyed lunch and engaged in sightseeing and shopping, immersing ourselves in the vibrant atmosphere of the city.

Wednesday 10: Workshop on Creating a Community/School Project and Marching Bass Drums Workshop. We participated in a workshop on Creating a Community/School Project from scratch, where we learned about project development and collaborated to create our own innovative ideas. We also had the opportunity to engage in a Marching Bass Drums Workshop, exploring rhythmic patterns and teamwork.

Thursday 11: Cultural trip to Roca Cape and Sintra. We visited Roca Cape, the westernmost point of mainland Europe, enjoying the breathtaking coastal scenery. In Sintra, we explored the enchanting Quinta da Regaleira and the majestic Sintra National Palace, immersing ourselves in the rich history and architecture of the region. We also had time for sightseeing, getting to know the village and its unique charm.



Friday 12: Workshop on Presenting the School/Community Project and Guided Visits. We participated in a workshop on Presenting the School/Community Project, refining our ideas and developing effective ways to communicate our projects. We visited the "Museu Industrial Baía do Tejo," where Portuguese students conducted a guided visit, providing us with insights into the region's industrial history. We had the opportunity to visit the Portuguese Parliament (guest teams), while the host team visited "Casa Fernando Pessoa," immersing ourselves in Portuguese cultural and literary heritage.

Our mobility experience in Barreiro as part of the D.E.M.O.S. project left a lasting impact on all of us, the participating students. It was a truly remarkable and transformative journey. Throughout our time in

Barreiro, we successfully fulfilled the project's objectives of promoting democratic thinking, challenging stereotypes, and fostering cultural understanding. Staying with Portuguese families provided us with a profound immersion into the local culture, allowing us to forge deep connections and lifelong friendships. The activities we participated in, the knowledge we acquired, and the bonds we formed have forever shaped our perspectives on democracy, cultural diversity, and our shared European citizenship. We cannot express enough gratitude for the opportunity to be part of the D.E.M.O.S. project, as it has empowered us to contribute to the creation of a more inclusive and democratic society.





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