

Cyprus' Evaluation/ Feedback regarding the first transnational meeting in Serres/ Greece

Participants/ Budget

The meeting was held in Serres , Greece between 1- 5 October 2017. Two teachers participated from our school, the headmaster Mr. George Shiambis and the teacher Antouanetta Skordi. We used €1150 from our budget for travelling expenses.

Purpose of the meeting

We knew from the beginning that this meeting was very important for clarifying any organizational misunderstandings and for setting specific timelines for the project's activities such as the competitions and the skype meetings. At the same time it was important because it would give us an insight in Greece's policies regarding active citizenship and inclusion.

What happened before the meeting?

The Greek school worked eagerly to organize the meeting by informing early all the participants about the program and giving valuable information about travelling and accommodation possibilities in Serres. The participants' list and the invitation to the meeting with specific reference to the timetable of the meeting were sent out early and guided well the whole meeting. Every participant arrived on time for the meeting to start and had a warm welcome!

What happened at the meeting?

The meeting was held both at the hotel and the school. We had also the opportunity to get to know the city and the area, as well as the neighborhood of the ROMA population of Serres.

During the first day we had a presentation of the three day meeting agenda and presentations of all the participating schools and countries. These presentations enabled us to get to know better all the schools since they included photos and films. At the first day we had also presentations from the schools regarding the project so far in each country.

A very important lecture was held at the first day regarding active citizenship and needs to be mentioned. More specifically Mrs Anta Tsaira (Consultant on EU- funded Projects) presented about the role of the Club Serres for UNESCO and suggested a lot of interesting activities that schools might be involved to in implementing an active citizenship curriculum.

During the second day of the meeting a discussion for the creation of the e-twinning platform of the project was held that clarified any misunderstandings and explained the role of each participant country. Also, important information was given about the Logo competition (between schools) and the Mascot competition (within schools). Deadlines for these two competitions were set.

Very important were also the presentations of all schools regarding the inclusion practices in their countries and the integration of children with disabilities through the use of an active citizenship curriculum. Mr. Konstantinos Kioses presented for the Greek team and explained in detail the Greek system of inclusion.

In the afternoon we had the chance to visit places of historical and natural interest and we exchanged ideas about how we could use them in active citizenship activities in the following months of our project.

At the third day, we had the opportunity to visit the special school of Serres and the Therapeutic Horse- Riding Centre and gathered information about special schools in Greece, procedures to evaluate students and therapeutic techniques. Later on we visited the school and had a meeting with students in classes where we watched parts of some lessons.

General Conclusions/ Points to look for the Future

Generally it was a very well organized meeting that set the basis of a fruitful co-operation, clarified the project's timetable and the responsibilities of each participant country . It is very important that after this project meeting we came closer to each other and the friendship bond created will be valuable for the project's effectiveness.

Some suggestions to consider for future meetings:

1. It would be better if we had more time in the school unit to see inclusion in practice, however we understand that the program was too tight and the days weren't enough, if we take in mind that a lot of presentations took place regarding inclusion and active citizenship.
2. We would like to have more information regarding the school's program on the inclusion of the ROMA students and more specifically about programs done with the University of Thessaloniki. This information could be given at the second transnational meeting that will be held next September in Germany.
3. Thank you Greece for a fully organized meeting and a great hospitality!

For the Cyprus School,

George Siampis

Headmaster