

Madeira mobility report

Day 1

This day was the arrival day and the start of a new experience that would later become unforgettable. The Finnish students and teachers were the first to arrive and I was hosting two of them. Their names were Aleks and Juha, both student boys. It was a nice to have contact with foreign people this way for the first time. My dad drove us home. When we arrived home, after a long ride and conversation in the car, we had lunch at my place which they enjoyed and they got to know my mum. We then asked if they wanted to get to know some Madeira's nature and they agreed. Having said that we went to Pico do Areeiro, the second highest peak in Madeira (1 818 m of height). They said it was one of the most beautiful places they had been and immediately said they would return. After that we went to ForumMadeira so they could buy some stuff and then we headed to the city centre. We had dinner in a very well-known restaurant called "Castelo dos Hambúrgueres". Once again they really enjoyed the meal. We also went around the city on foot and let them know some places. The day was over...

Day 2

This was the first day of activities. In that morning we went to school on foot and there was a Welcome Speech after their reception at our school (Escola Básica e Secundária Gonçalves Zarco). During the morning there were some Ice-breaking activities and a coffee break to get to know each other better. Also there was a Geocaching activity in which everything went according to plan. Yes, it was a success...everyone had fun. Following that everyone had lunch at the school canteen and then we went to the city centre. Some were taking part in a debate about Multiculturalism in which I was involved. It was certainly very enriching and life-changing! At the same time some groups were visiting some of the main city museums. After all of that we all met at "Praça do Povo". Me and my boys along with some other colleagues and partners went back home by bus. At night we all had dinner in MadeiraShopping and had a great time! This was an excellent way of forging greater connections between everyone!

Day 3

On this day we had a lot fun. We started off meeting in the city centre and then went to "Monte" in a Cable Car Trip. There we had a guided visit to the Tropical garden – Monte Palace, the most important and visited garden in Madeira. Even for the locals it was a breath-taking experience. After returning to Funchal we had a picnic together which really helped everyone get closer! Again very enjoyable times we spent. That afternoon we had the Literary Soirée at the wine Institute. We had to arrive early to prepare everything and have a rehearsal. There we had to be presenters, to recite poems and even play instruments. There were a lot of interesting musical moments. It was a blast! In the end everyone sang "Imagine" by John Lennon which made it even more fantastic. After all that stress and emotions we went to down town and got some food for dinner. Some went for street food and others go McDonald's. We all had fun!

Day 4

It was a very sunny and pleasant Saturday! It was time for a Levada walk! We departed from school and drove to Encumeada, a higher place. There we started the walk, which was very surprising for the foreign students due to the natural beauty and observable landscapes. In the middle some students (me and colleagues) talked about the formation, geological features and species that live in that site. We had lunch in Chão dos Louros, a little place where families gather to have picnics or barbecues. There we had the typical “Espetada” (Meat on the stick) along with potatoes and salad. Again it was a nice time listening to some 80s music! Since it was still early we decided to go to Cabo Girão (The seventh highest cape in Europe) where the view to the sea and land is breath-taking! Well it was time to return to school...In the evening we all gathered in Câmara de Lobos and gave a taste to the others of a typical drink called Nikita. It is made of milkshake and ice cream. The night was fun!

Day 5

Once again we departed from school, but this time not only for a Levada but also for a little tour! First we did a little Levada in Balcões. There we had the chance to enjoy the view from a high point...once again breath-taking! We also went to see little pools with fish called “Truta” (Trout). Then we moved to Santana, a Madeiran city. We got to see the typical houses and have lunch there. As always a nice time we had! After this we went to Machico...the majority stayed there and went to the beach. We got the chance to go to Ponta de São Lourenço, a geologically interesting place. Then we went back to Machico where I and a friend of mine (Alex) had lunch. It was time to go back to school...

Day 6

This day was a little bit calmer. We started with preparing presentations and writing on Twinspace about the debate, the Assembly and the museums visited. After a coffee break we had an activity of painting ceramic tiles (“Azulejos” in Portuguese). We then had a lunch break and so I invited Rodrigo and the girls he was hosting, Margherita Di Leta and Julia Escalle, to come over my house and have lunch. We had Spaghetti Bolognese and they liked it...Margherita Di Leta liked it so I believe it was good since she’s from Bologna! We then went by bus to the city centre and had a Touristic Route in Funchal. We were divided in three groups and I was the guide of one. The activity started pretty messy given that Jade (a girl from La Reunion) fainted and had to leave with Diego to the shopping centre where it was colder. We visited and let them know a little about those places, but it was extremely hot to visit all of them. We stopped for an ice-cream and then headed to the main avenue as the meeting point. We had a boat trip and there was a chance to watch the sunset. After that some went home while others stayed in Funchal and went to McDonald’s. On the exit I stayed with the Italian girls and talked with them and took them to an ice-cream shop. They enjoyed the ice-cream! It was here that I really started liking them! They were fun!

Day 7

We started the day by visiting the Art Gallery of our school (EspaçoMar) while some other students were preparing the presentations and some others participating in a Web Radio activity. After that we all gathered at the school basement and watched the presentations of our colleagues from class 7⁰⁴ in which the topic was the Outermost of France. These presentations were really interesting. Some typical dances of La Reunion and Tahiti were shown. We then had a coffee break. After this we had a traditional Madeiran games activity where everyone could participate. It was time for a lunch break...some went to MadeiraShopping and some went to a café. Me, Rodrigo, Joana and Mariana (all colleagues) came to my place and had lunch. Again we had a great time together! We went back to school to participate in some workshops such as instrument and dance related. In our classes there were two groups and each one performed one typical dance and asked the audience to join them. The same with the other countries' students. After that we had a closing ceremony which included a quiz activity. We then had a Farewell Dinner at our school which was followed by a Karaoke activity in which I sang along with some of my friends! It was emotional! Also we wrote some small messages in each other's papers that we had been given by Francisco (our colleague). We then headed for the city centre and had fun! It was sad to see them go...but I had a trick that had been planned along with Giorgia. I would show up in the airport to say goodbye to the Italian girls.

Day 8

This day was the worst!!! So at 4 am I showed up at the airport and they were all surprised! It was great to surprise them and see their reactions! After some time it was time for the definitive goodbye...it was sad! I came back home and had to wait so then I could take the Finnish guys to the airport. Later that I sent a message to each Italian girl and I cried! It was awesome to meet them!

And this how everything ended...a great and unique experience! Never to be forgotten! Thank you to everyone!

João Cunha