**Students of the Elexalde Institute explain to the mayor their experience of exchange with Greek students**
Over the past two years, students from  Elexalde High School in Galdakao and the Katerini Institute (Greece) have participated in a cultural and heritage exchange programme. As part of the European Erasmus+ programme, they have participated in the project Discover and share your identity mark, and they feel sad that it is about to end: the programme will end in May. The experience has been very enriching, as both teachers and students explained. Although the pandemic has made the programme proceed as planned, they have realised  that they have learned more than they thought. In addition to cultural learning, they have also made
all contacts  in English, which has helped students internalize and naturalize the language.

The teachers Gemma Gutiérrez and Iratxe Cuñado and the group of students from first of bachiller from  Elexalde High School who have participated in the program have told mayor Iñigo Hernando about their experience. The group was received in the plenary hall of City Hall last week.

As they told the mayor, the project has given them the opportunity to know the Greek heritage , the culture of ancient Macedonia, mythological characters, food, sports and their way of life. And not only did they learn the culture of  Katerini or Greece,  they have also  learned more than they thought of themselves, of the Basque Country, of their landscapes, of their culture and their mythology. " It has been very enriching, "they say. In addition, they have found surprising similarities between both cultures.
Last year they lived the most intense moment of the experience, travelling to Katerini. They shared their culture and ways of life, staying in the Greek homes. However, the pandemic twisted their plans: they had to return a day ahead of schedule because that was when mobility began to be restricted. Katerini’s group was unable to return the visit to Galdakao. However, they have faced the difficulties with imagination -and the support of technologies-; according to Gutiérrez, they have organised a "virtual mobility".  The two groups have remained in contact online: they have recorded Basque  sports in  both towns as a challenge, and have learned to cook meals on line.

The mayor has learned about the experience from the students, after which he has sent an invitation to the Katerini team through video. He has assured them that Galdakao will welcome them with open arms in case they return the visit.