ERASMUS⁺ School Exchange Partnership "Get in shape for Europe" (GISE)

**Newsletter No. 3
November 2019**

The partnership takes place between September 2018 and August 2020 and involves 5 European schools:
"Stefan Procopiu" High School (Romania, Vaslui) - coordinator
Foreign Language Secondary School (Bulgaria, Pleven) –partner
5th General Senior High School of Aigaleo (Greece, Aigaleo) – partner
The High School of Economics and Gastronomy (Tarnów, Poland)-partner
I.I.S. E. Majorana-A. Cascino (Piazza Armerina, Enna, Italy)-partner

This newsletter contains information about the transnational activities hosted by 5ᵗʰ General Senior High School of Aigaleo, Aigaleo, Greece between 5-7 November 2019:

C5 Short-term joint staff training Events – Learning/teaching/training activity "Democratic competences in digital era" (23 participants)

C6 Short-term exchanges of groups of Pupils – Learning/teaching/training activity " Get in Shape for Europe ... in Greece" (46 participants)

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Let's discover the city of Aigaleo!

Aigaleo is an urban area and a municipality located in the western sector of the Attica region with a population estimated at around 69.946 inhabitants. The city of Aigaleo took its name from Mount Aigaleo, the famous mountain from where, as the tradition says, the Persian king Xerxes, watched the defeat of the Persian fleet at the naval battle of Salamis in 480 BC. The name of Mount Aigaleo comes from the "aiga" (meaning goat) and "leo" (from the people). The interpretation given to the name is "People of goat". So when the Municipality of Aigaleo was formed in 1941, it took its name.
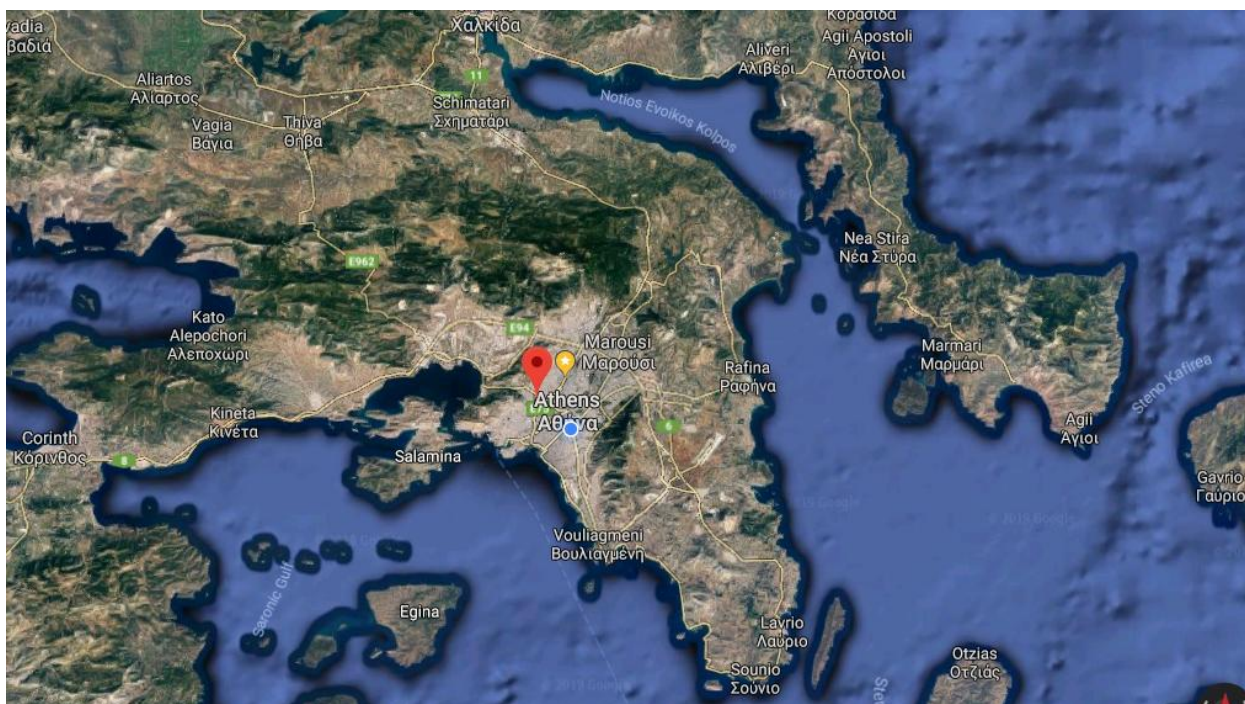
In 1874, the gunpowder plant that opened in the area attracted workers from many regions, especially from Mani and since then the area has been known as Baroutadiko.

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THE METRO AND HIS „MUSEUMS"

The center of Aigaleo is crossed by the oldest road in ancient Greece (and the best preserved among the ancient roads of the Greeks): Hiera Odos (Sacred Road). The subway line 3 that connects the Athens Airport with the suburbs follows, with minor exceptions, the ancient Greek road. This subwaynet work is one of the legacies of the 2004 Olympic Games hosted by Athens (today Athens is in the top 10 cities with the most efficient metro networks). The construction of the subway system led to the discovery of more than 50000 objects belonging to the ancient Greek culture (the old walls of the city, ceramic vessels, parts of an aqueduct, etc.). Many of these objects can be found at the Cycladic Art Museum in Athens. Other objects are kept in the places where they were discovered.

Aigaleo, Elaionas and Agia Marina are the 3 localities located on the old Greek route. The subway stations in these 3 localities contain permanent exhibitions with important objects discovered during the realization of the subway system during the 2004 Olympic Games hosted by Athens. The largest exhibition space is located in the subway station of Aigaleo. One of the sections is focused on ceramic objects. The other section is focused on objects related to the industrial activities that took place along the "sacred road".

The Aigaleo station is located under Eleutherios Venizelos Square (or Estavromenos Square). Part of the old sacred road was discovered here, as well as parts of a cemetery on the road side. The skeleton of a horse that drowned in the wake of the Kifissos River is famous.

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" The horse of Elaionas" – The Metro station of Aigaleo

The **"sacred road"** made the connection between the cities of Athens and Eleusis. This was the way to celebrate the "**Mysteries of Eleusis".** The mysteries of Eleusis were biennial holidays held in ancient Greece in the temple of Eleusis dedicated to the goddess Demetra and her daughter Persephone in gratitude for the gift of agriculture. According to the legend, the Eleusines were protected by Demetra because they had been receptive to her when she took on the appearance of a poor old woman, when she was looking for her daughter Persephone.

Of all the mysteries practised in ancient Greece, those of Eleusis are the most important, considered to have "superior merits to all religious acts", as historian Pausanias states. The initiation into the Eleusine Mysteries takes place in two stages. First, one participates in the "little mysteries" that take place in the spring and consisted mainly of a purification that gives the initiates the status of *mystes.*Then, they can participate in the "great mysteries" celebrated during the sowing, in September-October. After they have been purified at sea, the *mystes* sacrifices an animal to the goddess and begins the initiation itself. The candidates are taken to Eleusinion, an Athenian temple dedicated to mysteries, where they are presented with ritual objects from Eleusis. The next day they go in procession to *Telesterion,* the "initiation hall", from the sanctuary of Eleusis.

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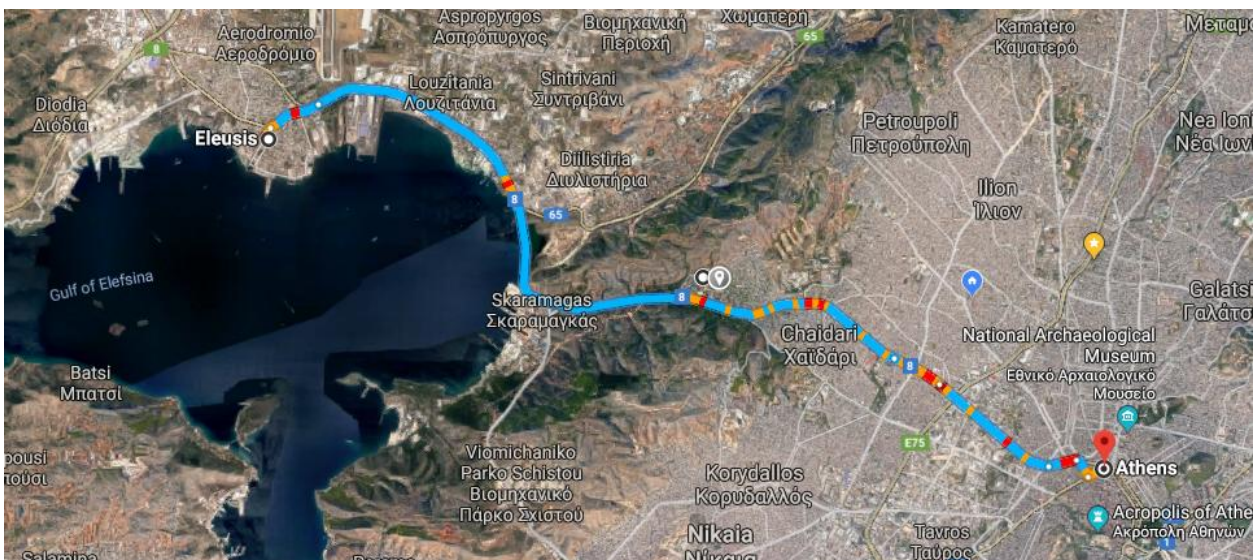
Other points of interest in the city of Aigaleo

Holy Temple of Exaltation of the Holy Cross of Aigaleo ("The Crucified")

The Museum of Asia Minor Culture

Historical Folklore Ecomuseum of Aigaleo

Among others, there are the following exhibits: Artillery, Weaving, Sewing, Furniture, Ironworks, Woodworking, Agricultural Tools Old Weapons, Historical Literature, Old Printing Books, Rare Collectibles.

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**Monument dedicated to the victims of
the Holocaust of Aigaleo**

5th General Senior High School of Aigaleo

In the city of Aigaleo there are 10 secondary schools, 9 high schools (including 3 vocational schools) and a university. **5th General Senior HighSchool of Aigaleo** has 270 students aged between 15 and 18 and about 30 teachers. The school, established in 1985, has experience in implementing projects with a theme similar to the project "Get in shape for Europe" (GISE): Youth Parliament, Visit to the Greek Parliament, 1974: Restoration of Democracy in Greece, Rhetorical strategies and debate, Human rights, European Youth Parliament, Euroscola, Model United Nations, EPAS-European Parliament Ambassador School program.

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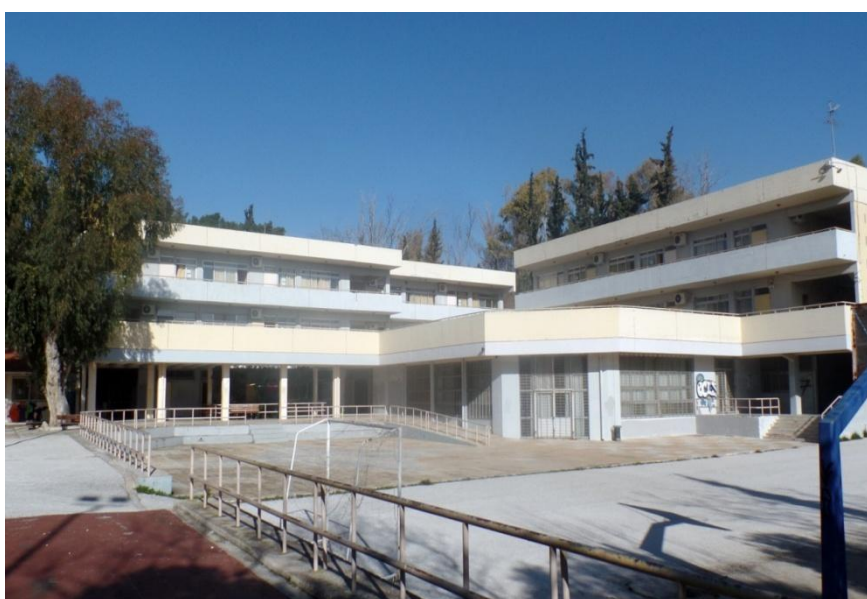
Official opening of the transnational activities of learning, teaching and training for students and teachers

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The Mayor of Aigaleo, who gave the partners a medalion with Cliestene, was present at the opening ceremony of the transnational activities

The Greek students from the target group of the Gise project, presented a short artistic performance in order to present us some of their traditional songs and dances.

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Activity Goal: the exchange of best practices and experiences on the development of critical thinking among students about the use of the Internet and social networks as a weapon against discrimination and manipulation.

Motto: "We need to prepare young people to live in a world of images,strong words and sounds" (UNESCO, 1982)

Work sessions:
a) debates and presentations. Approached topics:
- Erasmus+ - opportunities and challenges;
- "Democratic Competences in the Digital Era – theoretical aspects". The following issues were addressed:
  - Media Education in Partner Countries. Does the current formal curriculum include elements which aim at the democratic citizenship education, in the context of virtual space? (knowledge and exercise of rights and responsibilities in society; valorization of diversity; active participation in the life of the community/society).
  - Who do you think should be responsible for providing the skills needed to conduct democratic communication and behavior in the online environment?
  - How can we promote democratic competences, respect for diversity and mutual understanding among young people who use social media? How can the school contribute to the development of students' democratic competences?
  - What competencies should we pass on to students for them to have social, democratic, non-discriminatory and tolerant behaviour in the online environment?
  - Are social media tools a challenge in education? Media strategies and their educational impact
  - How can eTwinning help teachers to promote democratic competences among students?
  - How can the teachers develop critical thinking among students?
- "Democratic Competences in the Digital Era – practical aspects":
  - presentation of some examples of good practices, followed by discussions, learning activities that promote democracy and human rights, that help develop critical thinking among students regarding the use of the Internet and social networks as a weapon against discrimination and manipulation
  - presentations and discussions regarding the "problem based learning" and "problem based learning" methods
  - analysis of social media tools and their application in didactic work
  - drafting a code of conduct on combatting the hate speech in the online environment
- the brochure "Democratic Competences in the Digital Era"

b) workshops, practical exercises and learning activities, debates and reflections in transnational mixed teams:
- "How well do you know your digital self? Let's find out how your online footprint affects your democratic competences", an interactive presentation by Ms Olga Gkotsopoulou, PhD candidate at the Faculty of Law and Criminology of Vrije Universiteit, Brussels
- "Real of Fake? Disinformation and democracy" an interactive presentation by Mr George Moschos and Ms Matoula Papadimitriou, founding members of Initiative for Article 12.

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- "Are the oracles of the ancient times related to the fake news of modern times?" - Interactive activities with students

c) reflection and evaluation exercises (comments and feedback, peer activity, filling in questionnaires), granting mobility certificates.

The main conclusions of the working sessions: *Teachers need tools to be able to teach students what the press is, what is its role, how to distinguish the manipulation of information and how to be aware citizens of the Internet age. The teachers must train young people's ability to act as active citizens in their communities, to protect human rights, gender equality, sustainable development, peace and social justice.*

RESULTS
Intangible
- awareness of the importance of approaching media education in schools, the need to train teachers in this field;
- improved knowledge about culture and civilization of Greek culture and civilisation;
- exchange of experiences and best practices on implementing European projects, on design and implementation of learning activities focused on fake news, manipulation and misinformation, cyberbullying, digital self, democratic competences in digital era etc. and integration into school and extra-curricular activities;
- developing the European dimension of partner schools through the exchange of good practices, increasing the capacity for transnational cooperation
- increasing motivation for new activities, positive attitude toward oneself and others, awareness of one's own attitude towards other ethno-linguistic groups;
- development of communication skills in English;

Tangibile: the brochure "Democratic Competences in the Digital Era"

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C6- Short-term exchanges of groups of Pupils "Get in Shape for Europe ... in Greece"

The students participated in the following activities:

- Presentations: "My country, my city, my school"
- Workshops:
  - ➢ "How well do you know your digital self? Let's find out how your online footprint affects your democratic competences"; the activity was coordinated by Ms. Olga Gkotsopoulou, PhD candidate at the Faculty of Law and Criminology of Vrije Universiteit Brussels
  - ➢ "Real of Fake? Disinformation and democracy", "Why is it so important nowadays to be fully aware of media manipulation and how does that affect our lives?"; the activity was coordinated by Mr. George Moschos and Ms. Matoula Papadimitriou, founding members of Initiative for Article 12.
- Learning and teaching activities, study visits:
  - ➢ "Polysemy of the Park of Aigaleo: Space, Time, People"-"The metro of Aigaleo and its museums": an alternative cultural route";
  - ➢ "Democracy in Ancient Athens and Democracy Today";
  - ➢ "Are the oracles of the ancient times related to the fake news of modern times?", the "Pythia oracles giving" and "Solidarity from the navel of the Earth in Delphi".
- evaluation exercises, granting of attendance certificates, granting the achievements certificates.

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"Pythia oracles giving" activity

Delphi is best known as the home of the famous Oracle, the Pythia, the sibyl, a powerful priestess at the sanctuary dedicated to Apollo, who saw the future of kings and nations. She used to give ambiguous answers to the questions posed.

The students played the game posing questions to Pythia and receiving equivocal answers, becoming thus aware of the disinformation and manipulation techniques currently implemented. The ambiguous answers are also relevant today.

What, then, is media education than an effort to decipher the ambiguous messages of our day and reveal the false imprint on any news or rumor?

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"Solidarity from the navel of the Earth in Delphi"

Granting the achievements certificates

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THE IMPACT OF THE ACTIVITIES ON THE STUDENTS

Following the participation in the work sessions "Get in shape for Europe ... in Greece", the participating students:

- they have become aware of the dangers of using new technologies and have learned some tips to bypass the traps of the Internet and social networks; young people need to be more careful when using various applications, when sharing information, news, photos;

- young people are easy to manipulate through the media and do not have the skills to navigate the online environment, to understand the news, information and pictures they see, to distinguish between true and false, between manipulation and information.

- photos and videos can be forged and it is increasingly difficult to differentiate between what is true and what is false; students need to know how to identify fake news;

- young people need to acquire skills and abilities to help them cope with the digital age in which they are bombarded with information from all sides;

- developing media skills is absolutely necessary for transforming young people into active European citizens;

- the contemporary democracy is bombarded with numerous dangers (manipulation, misinformation, online harassment, hate speech) and the European Union is involved in this fight;

- The ancient Greek civilization is one of the pillars of European civilization and has offered the world a first model of civilization.

RESULTS

a) Intangible

- increasing students' knowledge about the EU, about the culture and the civilization of partner countries, cities, schools
- developing social, civic and intercultural competences by participating in joint transnational activities (developing pupils' abilities to participate in different communication situations, teamwork, cooperative, respecting the views of others, positive relationship with others, a better understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity, recognition and acceptance of diversity)
- developing critical thinking about the use of the Internet and social networks as a weapon against discrimination and manipulation
- developing intellectual work skills (searching for information on the Internet, structuring and summarizing them, etc.)
- improving communication skills in English
- increasing motivation and confidence in one's own person

b) Tangible: presentations, worksheets, portfolios

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