

SHORT-TERM EXCHANGE OF STUDENTS IN HELSINKI

As part of the Erasmus + project, KA2, "Own Your Learning 2.0", from 4th to 11th February 2018, a short-term exchange of students was held in Helsinki. Six Portuguese students took part in it: two twelfth grade ones, two eleventh grade ones and two eighth grade ones.

Over the course of a week, our students had the opportunity to socialize with several students from Ireland, the Netherlands and, of course, Finland. They attended various classes of their Finnish hosts and thus they found out, on the spot, some differences between the Finnish educational system and ours.

They had also the opportunity of seeing the inequalities between their school and *Latokartanon perukoulu*, such as: the doors and the walls of classrooms are made with panes of glass and they have a skating ring in front of the school.

The visit to Heureka was amazing because it provided the chance to make a lot of experiments related to several scientific areas such as chemistry, biology and physics. In the auditorium of science, we saw the show "Joy of fair" which provided a lot of interesting moments in a scientific way. This example may be given: on the basis of an open cylinder, there was dry ice that released carbon dioxide; later, a container *full* of carbon dioxide (interesting, because it seemed it was empty, obviously due to the invisible character of that chemical compound) put out a row of lit candles. In the planetary "looking for dark matter", it was simulated a very realistic trip into and through space and a tour of CERN (*Conseil Européen Pour La Recherche Nucléaire*) from Geneva. At the end of these simulated experiences, everyone was delighted. In a space intended to alter the scales of the exhibited objects, some funny situations came up.

Near this area, a tunnel showed images of bacteria and pathogenic viruses (HIV, Ebola, Flu, etc.) as well as their symptoms.

On another day, we set off for the Talma ski resort, where both teachers and students who so wished, had a lesson in the morning and, in the afternoon, skied freely, without a teacher's personal follow-up, but obviously down a slightly steep slope. The practice of snowboarding, sledding, and Alpine downhill skiing was also possible. At the end of the day, two of our students dared to do skiing down the highest and steepest hill, having done it with amazing dexterity and consequent success!

On the next day, every Erasmus+, KA2 students played kahoot, a quiz related to geography and historical events about Finland as well as about Helsinki and the Finnish language. The multilingual groups were obviously made up of students from all the countries. The winner group was precisely the one in which three Portuguese students took part. They felt overwhelmed. The last activity was the making of an e-magazine, in which the students compiled everything they did until that very moment in the context of the implementation of the project in Finland.

On different days, students from all countries played a lot of games: on the first one, icebreakers and, on the last, before the closing ceremony, a star game: students and teachers wrote comments of their colleagues on stars previously handed over to all. These stars will surely be kept by all as unforgettable memories.

It should also be noted that, over two days, one of our students enthusiastically took the most of a cruise to Sweden, more specifically Stockholm, offered by his hosting family.

The feeling of having to daily bear negative temperatures (the lowest -15° C) was unique for the Portuguese group.

These experiences were fascinating, enriching and unforgettable for our students and, for this very reason, lifelong experiences (the expression is precisely theirs).