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PRESS RELEASE – MEETING IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Náchod, Czech Republic, 14-18th March 2022 International visit at Academia Mercurii

A unique Erasmus+ project about European citizenship and cultural heritage of Czech Republic, Spain, Denmark and Malta

On 14-18 the March, Academia Mercurii had a number of foreign guests visiting them: a group of students and teachers from Malta, Spain and teachers from Denmark visited the secondary school in Náchod as part of the Erasmus+ project: 'European citizenship – Cultural heritage unites us'. Through the project, that is financially supported by the European Union, students learn about the importance of European citizenship and about cultural heritage of the participating countries. The cultural heritage of the Czech Republic was the topic of this meeting and was explored in a practical way through many workshops about culture of Czechia at school and visits of cultural places. As part of the project, there are student exchange programs for the students to meet and get to know each other. This week, Academia Mercurii was the first school hosting the international groups. Next month, students and teachers from the schools will reciprocate and visit the partner school of Madrid, Spain on an exchange. During this week's visit, cultural heritage of the Czech Republic, both tangible and intangible, was the central theme. Students learnt about the local culture and visiting students had the opportunity of participating in some lessons at the school and learnt some important expressions in Czech language. Danish teachers had the opportunity for job shadowing of teachers of Academia Mercurii.

On Monday, students explored the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the Czech Republic within various workshops on the topic, one of them was a workshop in Spanish with an EVS Spanish volunteer about the life of a Spanish citizen in the Czech Republic and then students tasted Czech cuisine, Czech typical meals prepared by Czech families. On Tuesday, all the participants were welcome by the mayor of Náchod in the town hall of Náchod who spoke to them about the importance of European citizenship. Later the participants visited Náchod Castle where they were guided by students of Academia Mercurii and then explored the historic town centre. On Wednesday, after workshop about the connection of Czech writer Božena Němcová to Grandmother's Valley, the students spent the day exploring the rural buildings complex in Grandmother's Valley. On Thursday, the monastery of Broumov along with the historic centre of Broumov was visited. On the last day of the visit, precious Prague historic centre was visited with students of Academia Mercurii as guides. Most of the schools had already been participating in Erasmus+ projects before, as these Erasmus+ projects are a great opportunity for students to improve their spoken English and Spanish, boost their self-confidence, develop their social skills, travel, meet people and face new challenges.



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PRESS RELEASE – MEETING IN SPAIN

Madrid, Spain, 25-29th April 2022 International visit at I.E.S Joaquín Turina

A unique Erasmus+ project about European citizenship and cultural heritage of Czech Republic, Spain, Denmark and Malta

‘European citizenship – Cultural heritage unites us’ is the title of the exceptional Erasmus+ project which centers around various exchanges among I.E.S. Joaquín Turina in Madrid, Spain; Vordingborg Gymnasium & HF in Vordingborg, Denmark; Sacred Heart Minor Seminary in Victoria, Gozo, Malta and Academia Mercurii in Náchod, Czech Republic. In this project, the central focus is on the importance of European citizenship which is being reinforced by cultural heritage. This time, the project’s approach was the exploration of Spanish cultural heritage, organised by I.E.S. Joaquín Turina, in Madrid, Spain.

In the week of 25 until 29 April, students from the aforementioned schools of the Czech Republic and Malta travelled to the capital of Spain, Madrid to visit the Madrid secondary school and explore the Spanish cultural heritage. Danish teachers came to use the opportunity for job shadowing of teachers of the bilingual department of I.E.S. Joaquín Turina too.

It was to be a very busy week. On Monday, the students started their week doing sport activities together and then undertook a walk of Mythological route of Romans and Greek statues and symbols in the historic heart of Madrid. The day was finished in the famous worldwide gallery Museo del Prado where students were admiring the amazing paintings within a workshop. On Tuesday, students and teachers travelled to UNESCO sight Alcalá de Henares to visit the birth place of Miguel de Cervantes, the Roman city ruins and medieval university and competed in a photo competition. Wednesday was spent at another UNESCO sight, Toledo. Within mathematical route, students could admire many places connected with the three cultures having lived there in Middle ages, e.g. the Monastery of San Juan de los Reyes, the Synagogue of Santa María la Blanca, medieval fortification, cathedral and stone bridges, Bisagra gate and many others. Thursday and Friday were dedicated to exploration of Spanish culture within various workshops at the organising school, lessons observing for teachers and students, learning Spanish basic vocabulary and tasting Spanish cuisine, meals prepared by Spanish families. In the afternoons, the students took advantage of the big city to explore Spanish culture together and to get to know each other better to develop their friendship and practice their knowledge of Spanish.

This Erasmus+ project is co-funded by the European Union, will last until the end of August 2022 and is a great opportunity for students to improve their spoken English and Spanish, boost their self-confidence, develop their social skills, travel, meet people and face new challenges.



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PRESS RELEASE – MEETING ON MALTA

Victoria, Gozo, Malta, 9-13th May 2022 International visit at Sacred Heart Minor Seminary

A unique Erasmus+ project about European citizenship and cultural heritage of Czech Republic, Spain, Denmark and Malta

The last student meeting for the exceptional Erasmus+ project ‘European citizenship – Cultural heritage unites us’, a project which started in 2019 and is co-funded by European Union, took place in Victoria, Gozo, Malta, from May 9th up to and including May 22nd 2022. This meeting was organised by Sacred Heart Minor Seminary, a secondary school located in the heart of Victoria. Other participating schools travelling there with students were I.E.S. Joaquín Turina in Madrid, Spain and Academia Mercurii in Náchod, Czech Republic. Vordingborg Gymnasium & HF in Vordingborg, Denmark also sent their teachers for job shadowing of the Sacred Heart Minor Seminary teachers.

In the last student exchange for this project, students travelled to the medieval town of Victoria, on the island of Gozo to learn about the cultural heritage of Malta and the importance of European citizenship. The exchange lasted for five days.

On the first day, students were welcomed at the organising school in a welcome ceremony, played Kahoot quiz together and then they had opportunity to talk to a representative of Europe Direct about the importance of the European Union during this time of crisis. Mr. Daniel Borg also explained that the work undertaken by the European Union during these times helped bring to the fore the values which are most dear to the European Union, first and foremost the value of solidarity. In the afternoon, students visited the historic centre of Victoria and played Treasure hunt in Spanish language and a photo competition in the famous Citadella of Gozo.

The following days were filled with trips to the capital of Malta, Valletta and the megalithic temple of Ggantija to learn more about the rich cultural heritage of Malta. Also, the students visited the Dwejra Bay, dramatic coastal formations and a magical place for tourists and locals to relax and enjoy nature. Students also had the opportunity to try to produce a traditional bracelet in a craft workshop at school and to cook the traditional Maltese meal Ftira within a workshop, later eaten by them along with other meals of traditional Maltese cuisine. A lesson of Maltese language helped students to understand better the Maltese culture and was a good introduction to Twinspace projects about national languages presentations.

On the last day, the students worked in international groups on the project outcomes, exchanged books about cultural heritage of their countries and a closing ceremony ended the week full of cultural experiences.

This Erasmus+ project is co-funded by the European Union. 'European citizenship – Cultural heritage unites us' will last until the end of August 2022. All schools are eager to participate in these kind of projects, knowing that these foreign experiences are paramount for the education of the students.