

Returning from Hamburg

Hamburg was the second meeting of the Erasmus program on immigration and refuge which our school is participating in. This time the group of students who attended the meeting came from the second grade: Jason Anagnopoulos, Ricardo Achmetai, Sosanna Nikolopoulou, Pantelis Palimetakis, Theodore Pilihos and Apostolos Sakkalis. The escorting professors were: Mrs. Ioanna Palaiorouti and Mrs. Maro Triantafillou.

We believe we've had a very positive experience. We met new people from other European countries (Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Lithuania). We experienced cooperation in a group with peers we met for the first time, we saw how many things we had in common and how many beautiful relationships can be developed. We understood the value of our differences, differences that make our lives and ways of thinking more interesting. We also saw how much struggle it takes not to allow our differences cause interpersonal issues but instead become a fertile soil for new ideas and creative thinking. We experienced another educational system, that of Germany. In addition to that, we learned valuable information about the educational systems of the other 4 countries, and now we can have a yardstick for our own, better than before. We laughed, tasted new flavors, we saw how young people live in Germany.

We visited Berlin and there we went to the Holocaust Museum, in memory of the genocide of the Jews in the hands of Nazism. Then we were guided in the neighborhood of immigrants - the Turkish district- where we had a great tour guide showing us how architecture and politics connect and how to "read" buildings to understand the history of a city. In Hamburg we visited the Immigration Museum and learned about the massive displacement of people to the New World through the great port of Hamburg, in the last 300 years.

The last night we danced together, sang together and said goodbye in a celebration filled with youth, joy and emotion for leaving our new friends. Social media allow us to still keep contact and hopefully continue the beautiful relationships we built. There was a great gain in having the opportunity to improve our use of the English language and be more confident about our abilities: during our workshops we had a dynamic presence, our ideas and our methods turned into an opportunity for discussion by our peers and were many times accepted with joy and admiration.

Now we look forward to welcoming our foreign peers and their teachers, to continue our research around the urgent issue of refugees. More sensitive to human suffering and having deeply understood how important it is to think in favor of all people, ready to fight for a democratic and loving world, we will be happy to follow this investigation and acquaintance trip. It helps us see the world from a different perspective, to respect others and to rejoice with what we have and who we are.

A photographic survey of our trip can be found here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n_RaTFIG5Gc