EMAS meeting in Hungary: Back to the roots of humanity

On Wednesday we arrived at the hotel Fiume, in the centre of Békéscsaba. There we met the other students of the EMAS project: our friends from Belgium, Italy, the Czech Republic, Germany, Finland and of course the Hungarian students.

Together we went to the restaurant Zöld Elefánt (green elephant) to try the Hungarian food; later on we were divided into four mixed groups to get to know each other during some social activities: we had to solve problems together by doing some funny games such as the escaping-the-rope-game where we had to untie a rope which was tied around our wrists. The aim here was to lose the fear of body contact. Quite a successful activity that was! After we returned at the hotel we were all very tired and went to bed quickly.

Our day started at 7.30 am on Thursday with a nice breakfast after which we went to BéKSZI college and prepared national desks with typical food and information about EMAS in the different countries. Some Hungarian students came to watch our presentations and taste our delicious national food.

Afterwards we had a guided tour trough the school and learned something about their fields of study.

After the lunch at our hotel we walked to the local water company and got lots of impressions about how the water system works in the Békéscsaba region.

Then, we enjoyed a visit to the romantic Sza- badkigyós Castle, which is situated 10 km from Békéscsaba, by car.

We had some time to relax before we were all surprised when we walked to the dinning room, where a long table was standing in the middle, which was decorated as if we were royals. We got a four course menu and a lot of wine in between. As a result of that we were all feeling as if we were princes and princesses. The chef was a genius, and we were all fuller than full.

The last day of the EMAS project started again with a yummy breakfast that was followed by a walk to BéKSZI, where we saw a presentation of "Waste in Hungary" by a waste expert. Surprisingly the German Girls made a little presentation about why we tend to behave similar to turkeys before Christmas when we react to Global Warming.

We were again divided into two groups; the first one was in charge of advertisement and the other created the newspaper you are just holding in your hands. Afterwards we went to AGORA, a cultural centre which is still under construction to learn more about geothermal energy.

In the afternoon we visited the Puszta, a wide countryside in which Hungarian long-horn cattle were grazing. In this region we were nearly "attacked" by the cows, which seemed to be very interested in us.

For our final supper we walked to a traditional Slovakian house (over a hundred years old), where we also learned old traditions and typical dances and songs: A really beautiful evening!

We would like to thank all our Hungarian hosts for giving us such a pleasant and informative time.

Robert Gabriels
Tips for energy savings in households

25 October 2022

Kuniberg Berufskolleg’s senior class of “Assistant Business Administrators” (Kaufmännische Assistenten) organised an information stand in the historic city of Recklinghausen. The aim of the pupils was to inform the shoppers about measures that can be used to save energy in the household. The Assistants started to converse with the passers-by using a questionnaire. For example, they enquired about the electricity consumption and about what the people were doing to save energy. The pupils were prepared to help by giving hints for effective energy saving.

Currently, the Business Administrators are working on an international Comenius partnership project. Their aim is to gain an environment certificate awarded for fulfilling some hefty European guidelines (EMAS). In this context, the students have developed a set of guidelines for energy saving in schools and in private households. They are now presenting some of their results at their market stand. The aim is to give the citizens of Recklinghausen an overview on the following topics:

Tips for energy saving:

- Choice of ecological electricity providers
- Information regarding ecological illumination
- Information on the average energy consumption in private households and on energy saving household appliances

For younger market visitors an opportunity was provided to create environment buttons with several designs. Beverages and cakes sweetened the Kuniberg students’ and the shoppers’ afternoon in downtown Recklinghausen.
The assistant business administrators of Kuniberg produce a pile of ideas for rubbish disposal. Their aim is the development of a PR campaign for “rubbish problems” which can also be used by the partner schools in Belgium, Finland, Italy, Hungary and the Czech Republic for their EMAS environmental project.

On Tuesday the senior class began the new pilot project with a project day. The six classes of the course of study will collect their waste in three different containers until the Christmas holidays. Up to now there were one for residual waste and one for paper, now there will also be a yellow one for recyclable material. On Wednesdays and Fridays the students will take this yellow bin from their class to the huge container for recyclable materials on the ground floor. There, an EMAS team will check whether the waste is separated in the right way. “We will also make unannounced tests of the waste containers in the classroom” Stephan Breuer announced. He is the coordinator of the course and class teacher of the ASO1 and one of the coaches of this project.

At the start of the project, principal Dr. Walter Schulte thanked the students involved for their commitment--especially in the context of the school renovation work which has started this summer. The efforts fit the new “outfit” that the school will get next year and they also highlight the pioneering role that Kuniberg BK has assumed in the Vest region of Recklinghausen in the field of environmental protection. As the Principal of a European School, Dr. Schulte also appreciates the fact that the concept of waste separation and prevention will find its way to other European schools.

During the promotion day, the students of the ASO 1 informed their colleagues using different methods. Sven Cuber and Friedrich Mayer took the roles of teachers. They were quite satisfied with the results of their pedagogic work “We informed the classes about the background of waste separation and got a positive feedback.”

At three separate stands located in the foyer of the building, the students could attend three practical courses on waste separation and waste prevention: a quiz about waste “Who wants to be a Millionaire?”, a waste separation contest and a competition on hitting the right bin.

In addition, a waffle stand was positioned in the foyer of the school where the students motivated their colleagues to buy lunch boxes by offering a free waffle. The aim is to avoid the production of waste resulting from packaging. “We want as many students as possible to buy their pastry with these boxes and not wrapped in a paper bag.” Angelika Bakenfelder, the coordinator of the environmental protection at Kuniberg explains.

Another environmentally friendly activity was the collection of discarded mobile phones. Each of the 1.5 Billion mobile phones sold in 2010 contains over 60 valuable materials among which there are 30 metals. In aggregate, this means 14 metric tons of palladium, 36 tons of gold und 375 tons of silver.
The Finnish National Agency (CIMO) made a monitoring visit to our school in Kokemäki on the 7th of May 2012 concerning our Comenius project. The monitoring visit took place right after our meeting in Modena, Italy.

There were three ladies from Helsinki who wanted to know just about everything about our project. The discussion took three hours and from our school to that discussion took part Marko Kemppinen, Päivi Linnanto and Anssi Lehto, one of our students who was in Pilsen and in Modena.

There were three points which they wanted to check: document management, financial management and project plan and its realization.

The inspectors wanted to see the lists of participants, flight tickets and book keeping of this project. They also asked how many book keepers Sataedu has, how the bills circle, who receives the bills and who approves them. I think this was a bit surprising, I didn’t expect them to ask that specific questions about our financial management. However, they were very satisfied that our project has an account number of its own and that the coordinating teacher personally keeps an eye on how the money will spend.

Our discussion about the project plan and realization concerned mainly our school: who is involved in this project, how do we integrate the project into the studies, who decides, which students travel to the meetings, how do we keep contact with other countries, etc. However, during the discussion was stated that every participating school is taking steps towards a better environment and everybody’s steps are of different size. The starting point has been very different in schools like the commitment of the management. That’s why maybe half of the schools will actually apply for the EMAS certificate. The inspectors didn’t see this as a problem. The only reason for example to claim the money back is if the schools don’t have enough mobilities.

Päivi Linnanto

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**Hungarian - Italian Contests**