

Erasmus WEBS

Luarca 25.2 – 1.3.2019

Raport

I Liceum Ogólnokształcące im. Mikołaja Kopernika, Katowice, Poland

The first meeting of the project participants, which took place in Luarca (Spain), was attended by 10 students who were the most committed and actively participated in all project activities. They were recruited from all levels of education in our school, i.e. from third grade of junior high school, and grade one, two and three of our high school. The teachers participating in the exchanged were the Polish project coordinator, school psychologist and geography teacher



As our school had already visited the school in Luarca, (we were partners in another Erasmus + project a few years before) we knew very well that we could expect perfect organization from the Spanish partners. Obviously , we were not disappointed.



Students lived in the families of their Spanish pen pals. Due to differences between school systems in Spain and in Poland, the hosts of our students were generally younger. However, this was not a problem in establishing close relations between them. We could see it easily especially at the departure, when farewells and mutual assurances of further contact seemed to be endless. Some of the students were even invited to Luarca for holidays.

For our students, staying in Luarca, was a completely new experience. They live in a metropolitan area (over 4.5 million inhabitants) and for many of them it was the first contact with life in a small coastal village, where the pace of life and contacts between people differ from rush and anonymity of a big city.

The program of the meeting prepared by the school in Luarca included both cultural elements related to the visited region, such as photography workshops in Aviles, as well as activities strictly linked to learning and teaching in bilingually. We could compare Spanish, Polish, Dutch and German experience in this field.





Every day both students and teachers participated in various activities prepared by the Spanish school. Thanks to this, we noticed quite significant differences between the bilingualism system in Poland and Spain. The most important of them is the way of recruitment - in Spain when the student decide to attend a bilingual class his will and his parents consent is all that is taken into consideration, in Poland a student needs to pass the language aptitude test that measures his or her ability to learn a foreign language. To be able to attend a bilingual school in Spain, students only need to be a native Spanish speaker. Completing the bilingual education is also different. In Spain, unlike Poland, it does not end with any certificate confirming language proficiency. The purpose of learning in a bilingual class is to master a foreign language in such a way as to increase the chance of success in adulthood.

Another fairly significant difference is the possibility of employing an assistant teacher to help a subject teacher. They are usually recruited from among English-language university students (e.g. from the US), so that students can have contact with "live" English. There is also a lot of help for teachers who can focus on transferring the substantive content of the subject, and not only on the language side.



However, the way lessons are conducted in our countries is quite similar: except for language classes, the remaining subjects are taught simultaneously in both languages – a mother tongue and a foreign language.



During the meeting in Luarda we also participated in the general knowledge Olympiad, sport activities and workshops. Students recorded movies - often with the whole families of our hosts. It was also valuable that everything was done in international groups, often involving students who did not participate in the WEBS project on regular basis. As a result, we had a sense of participation in the full life of the school, and not only in its bilingual area.

What surprised Polish students and teachers was a completely different working time - due to the time shift, classes start later than in Poland. The lessons last 55 minutes (not 45 as in our case) and are not separated by breaks. The first break is at the lunchtime and unlike the rules in our country, students can then leave the school building unattended.



Teachers participating in the project also had the opportunity to attend classes prepared especially for them. They discovered the QUIZLET and FlipGrid programs that can help them in the teaching process, especially by using new methods to create tests and games, and numerous types of exercises.

We liked our visit to Luarca, the activities prepared for us and we really appreciated our hosts hospitality. We hope we will have the chance to come here again . As they say ‘you never know’ 😊