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Country: ITALY

Reflection on my experience and learning

Reflective Journal

This Reflective Journal is a useful means for your **professional development**. Please take a moment to reflect personally on the programme and write a few lines every day on your thoughts.

Possible areas of reflection: my *professional development* today, *cultural understanding*, *participation* in and understanding of *debates, talks, visits to schools, sharing of expertise* and building of *future partnerships* (Dissemination Strategies), *European Dimension*, etc.

Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where does your journey start? - Greatest challenges as an educator? - How will you incorporate what you have learned? - What are your goals for this programme?
Cultural Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What you have learned about the host culture. - Communication with the locals and other participants. - Cultural differences between Ireland and your country.
Language Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Change of perspective (teacher/learner) - Self-expression in a group setting - Communicating in a foreign country
Dissemination of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How will you share what you have learned? - With whom? - Conversations with colleagues
Meaningful Moments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Something specific that affected you on a personal / professional level? - Photos that you took - Music or sounds that you heard

If you decide to use an online platform for your journal please paste the link here:

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Sunday:

On the first day, in the auditorium of the Hotel Presidentii, after a presentation of the course and the various activities, each participant introduced himself or herself.

There are 98 participants from 11 different European countries.

One of the goals of the programme is to relate to others and to be proactive in order to fully understand different cultures and school systems.

For this we should open our minds and not bind ourselves to our cultural system but relate to our colleagues. One of my first impressions was of the role of women in Finland. A perfect gender equality that is also expressed at the political level. Their high level of civilisation also has an impact on the confidence they give their pupils to increase their level of autonomy.

Monday:

In the morning we were hosted by the school Lintumetsä in Espoo. After the presentation about the educational organisation, we had the opportunity to enter the classroom and observe the teachers' working methods. The classes have an average of 23 pupils, but during workshop lessons (chemistry, biology, physics) activities take place with a maximum of 13 pupils. We attended a chemistry lesson and a maths lesson. The teacher addresses a topic by asking questions (brainstorming) and the pupils actively participate by looking at pictures. In the class they do not all use the same text but the more able pupils use an expert book (Eksperti) and the maths text we looked at is with exercises without results and very lean and applicable.

The management of the school is entrusted to a few people. There is total trust in the school system and so there are fewer controls. The family is an active participant with the school, and everyone must find their own educational success, no one must be excluded.

I was very impressed by the availability of Finnish colleagues and the atmosphere in the teachers' room, their workplace is very valued and the rooms are made very welcoming. The presence of a kitchen equipped with all the comforts was beyond all expectations. We met a teacher of mathematics, chemistry and a colleague of French who has been in Italy many times. Another point in favour of their system of education is the low average age of their colleagues.

Tuesday:

At the Sokos Presidentii hotel in the morning there was a presentation on language learning in the Finnish school system. From primary school onwards, playful learning is essential to create attention, motivation and well-being. In Italy we should promote active participation and freedom of expression of pupils. Very often we use frontal teaching and focus on content. With Context 4 content it was possible to understand how Finland's past history has also influenced the national school system and its evolution.

Wednesday:

At the Faculty of Economics we listened to two Finnish teachers. I was very impressed by the active involvement of the pupils in the life of the class. The role of the teacher is to listen to the pupils and make them co-designers in the class life. This leads to dynamism in the classroom and increased attention. Improving a learning environment improves results. In my school we should listen more to the pupils and, also by means of satisfaction questionnaires, we should make the pupils active in designing the curriculum.

Thursday:

Once again we had confirmation of the autonomy of Finnish school education, at all school levels, from pre-school to upper secondary. For upper secondary school, I was very impressed by the possibility for pupils to do many sports activities such as swimming pool, basketball, within the same school building. While in the lower secondary school, it was important to see the possibility that the pupils have of practising workshop teaching in order to bring out their aptitudes and inclinations. In the afternoon in Porvoo, we experienced the context 4 content, very important to immerse the pupils in the context of the place, where the pupil is at the centre of learning and any place becomes a learning opportunity. We should in my school diversify the context and not stay in the classroom all the time.

Friday:

Also with a view to learning in any context, the visit to Tallinn was an opportunity to analyse Finnish and Estonian historical and cultural differences.

Saturday:

The role of Erasmus plus is the dissemination of the social values of the European Union. To contribute to the dissemination of the ideals of the European Union, therefore to disseminate according to the objectives of Europe are the values of democracy, human rights and respect for the law. To create networks and transmit the key values of the European Union in order to change the educational system for the better. The presentation of all the groups was a formative enrichment and we could observe the reflections of the various colleagues.

2 stars and a wish

Please share 2 aspects of the course that have fulfilled your goals and 1 that you will continue working on.



I am happy that now I know...

This experience was an opportunity for me to grow professionally and personally. The interaction with other teachers was very educational and I am very happy to have understood the differences and commonalities with the Italian education system. The visit to the Finnish school was certainly the best experience of this trip, I was able to observe the way of doing laboratory lessons and see the pupils in the classroom at work. I was able to see how the learning environment can improve the relationship dynamics between pupils and teachers.

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I would like to know more about...

The presence of the school strike during my stay in Finland certainly negatively influenced the experience. There was no opportunity to see the second school and I could not visit the central library in Helsinki as the second and third floors were closed. I was able to attend two chemistry and mathematics workshop lessons, I would also have liked to observe a Biology lesson.

A final overview of my experience in this European training programme:

The experience was certainly a very positive one, I improved my English language skills and observed the best education system in the world where pupils are at the centre of learning, with no one left out. I believe that my school should participate in other Erasmus projects as they are an educational enrichment for us teachers. The course provider was exceptional, he organised everything in the best possible way, the only flaw was the strike which could not have been foreseen.

Thank you!!

Well done on completing your Reflective Journal.