

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

ERASMUS+ PROJECT KA229 2019-1-SI01-KA229-060460

COME MY FRIEND, GET TO KNOW OUR CULTURE

VEN, AMIGO, CONOZCAMOS NUESTRA CULTURA

PROJECT LANGUAGES: ENGLISH, SPANISH

This two-year project, extended to 3 years, due to Covid pandemic involved six countries: **Slovenia, the Czech Republic, France, Poland, Spain and the United Kingdom**. Europe is undergoing a change. The EU's task is to tackle unemployment, migration and marginalization. Some countries face a brain drain; others with school dropout. Our time requires compassion, responsibility, entrepreneurial spirit and the school must respond. We can overcome the current challenges only with European cooperation.

At the initiative of the students and after analysing the situation among adolescents, the partner schools decided to present a project that **strengthened the awareness of European citizens through international cooperation**, promoted tolerance and social inclusion, put the participants in real intercultural and linguistic situations and gave them business knowledge and practices.

A joint travel agency motivated all participants and encourage them to know and **value the wealth of our National and European heritage**. Accepting the differences, we **discovered and shared intercultural democratic values**. New friendships, mobilities, welcoming foreigners into homes developed empathy in the whole school population, which is decreasing drastically among young people and it **promoted non-discrimination in terms of gender, nationality, religion, appearance and other forms of exclusion**. Through these exchanges we spread the vision of the business world, in real situations, we improved linguistic skills, we acquired digital skills and we will have better job opportunities.

A joint international travel agency was the main long-term result of the project, which allowed for a lasting impact on creativity and entrepreneurship. Students learnt the work of a tourist guide from real experience, from **job searching, travel and being a guide, editing a Guide for Young Travelers, learn about the laws of youth work, and the creation and promotion of the company**. With informal learning, they reinforced their attachment to European cultural heritage: they explored and visited partner countries, made a video, and attended classes with classmates. All these allowed students **to recognize the social, cultural and educational value of their European cultural heritage and its contribution to job creation, economic growth and social cohesion**.

By working together at home and by travelling, adolescents of different ages, interests, nationalities, religions, beliefs and health with the support of teachers

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worked on tolerance and respect for diversity. They **stayed with host families, learn about their habits and discover common values**. Girls and boys **used digital technologies to create products** (films, digital books, padlet, prezi) and communicated through social networks, and educators educated them about the **responsible use of the Internet, privacy, bullying, violence, and false information**.

Partner schools face early school desertion caused by psychological, educational and student learning difficulties. Teachers found an effective way to deal with these problems **using the Montessori pedagogy, a friendly educational approach that promotes independent work and the acquisition of work habits, while students maintain the joy of discovery, research and learning**.

The project also had **a seminar on innovative practices, ICT workshops, and eTwinning, job shadowing, visits to emblematic European places**, which made the teaching profession more attractive and diverse, since it allowed them to cooperate, to have a cultural and linguistic experience, to learn new methods and promote professional development.

The project **involved the entire community of six countries (students, teachers, school administration, staff, families, local authorities, associations)**, which was a very large number of participants, who addressed the project issues during the classes, created products, welcomed guests, acquired new knowledge and skills. The project foresaw five days of mobility **by 120 students between 12 and 16 years old and 66 teachers from six countries**.

The project has had long-term benefits since the established travel agency is permanent. The students will transfer the knowledge and skills they have acquired to the next generations and will train their colleagues in tourism, corporate management and ICT use.

An online travel agency will include the new partner schools which will participate in the next eTwinning, Erasmus or school exchanges and will negotiate virtually through eTwinning. The results of the project will be **published in local and youth media, on websites, TwinSpace, School Educat. Gateway and in Erasmus+ Projects Results**.

This will benefit all those who know our project. Last but not least, **the families of the students, the teachers, the school staff will benefit from the project when planning their vacations, since the project website will become a useful database for all**.