



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

Natural Wonders of Europe, a study of our National Parks and Nature Reserves



Welcome to the first newsletter of our Comenius Project.

“Natural Wonders of Europe, a study of our National Parks and Nature Reserves”

Our group consists of 11 schools from **Cyprus, Denmark, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Poland, Portugal, Spain and Turkey.**

In this age where global warming and its effects is being discussed by world leaders on a regular basis as a serious threat to the planet it is very suitable for our schools to study our National Parks and Nature Reserves together.

These areas contribute to our way of life; our health, our leisure, our well being and are treasures on our doorsteps. They give us insight into our countries as they were in the past.

The Philosophy of The National Parks and Nature reserves is one of *“Let Nature be Nature”* We are honoured to be able to study them in a European context.

Our project will be developed between September 2013 and July 2015.

Proinsias Mac Curtáin

Gaelscoil Faoiteann, Killarney, Ireland.

Project Coordinator



Ireland



Irish Logo winners



Our First Host School **EUROPASCHULE LANGERWEHE. GERMANY**

Our German hosts gave us One Hundred thousand Welcomes to their school and region in German. This is a brief synopsis of our trip there.

Tuesday November 5th

All the various groups arrived. Students met their host families and the full Comenius team of teachers were welcomed by Susanne, Klaus, Jörg, Sarah, Dirk and Benedict. We shared a meal at The Post Hotel.

Wednesday November 6th

Teachers and students went to Langerwehe to be welcomed at Europaschule Langerwehe by Mr Heinz Moll, the school headmaster. We then went by bus to **The Eifel National Park** where we did some various activities at The Wilderniscamp / Düttling. Highlights of this trip include meeting the barefoot park ranger and baking bread on open fires lit by flint. That afternoon the teachers had their first project meeting and the students returned to their host families. Some teachers enjoyed visiting host teachers homes and having a meal with them that night.

Thursday November 7th

Thursday morning was spent by the teachers discussing and planning work for the project year 2013-2014. During this meeting the schools adjudicated on the logo to represent the project. The Turkish logo was the one selected.



The students did various language activities with the German students and teachers.

In the afternoon students and teachers visited the city of the Holy Roman Emperor Charlemagne, **the city of Aachen**. He is considered the first European and it is

fitting that our first meeting took place very close to his seat of power. We had a guided tour around the city.

On our way to Aachen we had a special surprise by being able to visit the Lindt factory outlet shop which was a big hit with students and teachers alike.

Students returned to their host families that night and teachers had a meal together in Aachen.



Friday November 8th

On Friday we all went to the Eifel National Park again. We were broken into groups and went with Park Rangers on a very informative walking trip. On the way back to the school we stopped in the picturesque town of Monschau

where mustard making is a centuries old tradition. We had a great walk around this beautiful town.

That night was gala night. We were treated to some fantastic singing by the school band and enjoyed various acts from other students at the school. Each school made a presentation on their school for the students, teachers and Parents. We then had a beautiful meal prepared by the parents of the school.

Saturday November 9th

This was sadly our last day in Germany. Students and teachers visited **Cologne** and had a guided tour around this historical city.

Our highlight was climbing to the top of **The Cathedral** tower for panoramic views of this fabulous city. During free time in the afternoon we saw the shrine of The Magi in Cologne Cathedral and had some free time to ourselves in the city.

Everybody really enjoyed their trip to Langerwehe and sincere thanks to our German Hosts.





EUROPASCHULE LANGERWEHE. GERMANY



Comments from the visiting schools to Germany



Portugal

On the first day, we arrived at the airport in Maastricht at 11 o'clock. Two of our host families came to pick us up there and drove us to the Eifel National Park. We went there by bus, there we played a lot of games and we ate the lunch that our host families prepared for us.



On our third day, we went to school and did some activities with the students from the other countries. We had lunch at the school canteen. In the afternoon we went to Aachen, we stopped at the Lindt factory to buy some chocolates. When we arrived in Aachen, we had a guided tour of the Old town. After the guided tour we went to Starbucks and some souvenir shops. Then we came back to school.

On our fourth day, we did some activities at the Eifel Information Centre (*walking tour*) and then we drove to the town of Monschau to have lunch. After that we went to our hosts' houses. In the evening we went to "Gala night".

On the fifth day, we went to Koln and there we had a guided tour, after that we climbed to the top of the Cathedral tower. Then we went to McDonald's to have lunch and after that we went shopping for souvenirs. Then we went back to Langerwehe.

And on our last day, two of our host families took us to the airport in Dusseldorf and we went back to Portugal. We loved it! The host families were very nice and cozy. The teachers and students from all the countries were really friendly.

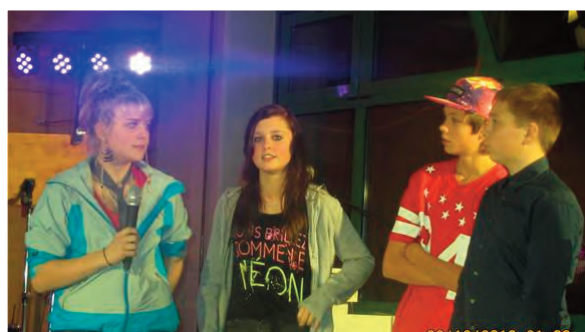
We hope we can meet everybody again.

Kisses from Bruna, Mariana S., Mariana B. and Mariana P.



Denmark

When we received the news, that we were going to Germany, we were so excited. Germany is a really interesting place, and there is a lot of historical buildings. To be alone in Germany, taught us to be a little more independent, than we were before. It was a really interesting experience, and it was a really pleasant visit. The people we met in Germany were all really nice, and made the trip so much better.



The places we went to were really exciting, and it was really nice that we had a tour guide, so that we could get a lot of information.

Best of regards: Frederik, Oliver, Nicoline, Elisabeth and Annika from Gug Skole



Turkey

Before I arrived to Germany I thought it was just like the other countries in Europe or it was like Turkey but when I came I was really shocked with the things I saw



because everywhere was green and they left everything natural they even didn't touch the trees by the roads.

And at the same time I thought I will have difficulty in communicating with the families and the students but everybody was so kind and nice that I felt as if I were at home.

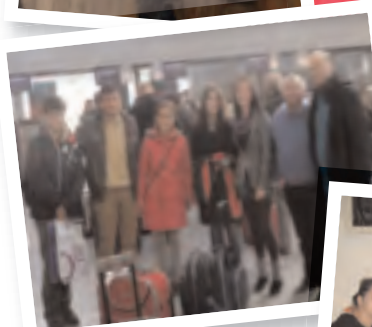
Especially I couldn't forget the Gala night because the presentations, the music, food and



the shows were really nice and exciting. Lastly I would like to talk about the beautiful Cologne. It was such a nice and exciting city that I couldn't forget. I bought lots of souvenirs in Cologne. I think there is no need to say anything about the parks we visited because they were really nice places.

At the beginning I was very excited because it was the first time I had got on a plane. When we come to Germany it was like I was in a dream.

I directly went to the family and although it



was hard for me to communicate I got on well with the people there. The trip was really nice and I saw and learnt a lot of different things.

One of the most interesting thing I learnt is that how nature is strong despite us. I also would like to talk about

the cathedral because when first heard that there are 600 steps I thought it will be easy but when I started I got tired and unfortunately I couldn't reach the top.

Lastly I would like to say my thanks to my family in GERMANY.

Every good thing has an end. In our hearts we're going home with memories of Germany.



Latvia

Dear school in Langerwehe!

Thank you for this beautiful and funny five days. We enjoyed every moments. Every excursion was amazing.



Your students were friendly. Communication with students from other countries was brilliant.



We miss our families very much. Give them a 'Hi!' from us.

Thank you for all! :)
Good wishes from Latvia





Spain

When we arrived at Germany, we did not know anything about this country and who we were going to meet there. However when we met our host families at the airport everything changed. We liked them very much and they were very friendly with all of us, so we felt better, we can say we felt at home.



We visited Eifel National Park, although the weather was awful, we enjoyed playing games in the forest and walking through the National Park. It was very nice!!!

The activities at the school were one of the best thing in the trip because we met new people and we participated in different games. We loved recording the "Spoken Dictionary", it was really fun!!



We visited some cities, but the most beautiful city was Cologne. It was amazing, it has the highest Cathedral in the world, and we went up to the tower. That day was incredible!!

Last day was very sad because we did not want to come back to Spain. Today, we miss our host families yet. However, we know we were very lucky to meet them and all students and teachers in Germany.

***We love the BIG Comenius Family!!!
GREETINGS FROM SPAIN***



Poland



Before going to Germany, I felt a bit uneasy. I was afraid that I will not be able to communicate with anyone. However, when I arrived at the place, everything changed. Family in which I lived was very nice. Tours were interesting and informative. I was most pleased with the trip to Cologne, where we visited the Cathedral. I think the trip to Germany was very successful.

Natalia

When we were flying by plane I was very excited. When we arrived at Langerwehe, I felt very good at once because my German friend's mum was very nice. I didn't like the first visit to the Natural Park. It was wet and it rained. On the other day, the trip to Eiffel Natural Park was very interesting. I liked best the Cologne Cathedral. I will remember this trip for a long time.

Joanna

On the day of departure I was very excited and happy because once again I flew abroad and this time with my friends. During the flight I was thinking about the family where I will stay and what it will be like.

The family was very sociable, lovable and with an amazing sense of humor. Tom and his brother Max, got along with me very well, despite the fact that at the beginning it was difficult to speak English. We had many common interests, and in general we weren't bored. Staying for these five days for me was really amazing.

During the trips I met many wonderful people from all over Europe, and with some I still keep in touch. The tours were very interesting, I got to know new customs, new places but unfortunately the weather wasn't good but it didn't matter so much. I really recommend taking

part in Comenius, because it is a new experience, we have a chance to meet new people, places and culture.

Dawid

I have to admit that before leaving, I was excited and a little bit scared. However, the atmosphere in the house where I lived was very happy and pleasant. I really enjoyed the trips to the city and visiting the parks. The only negative fact was, that we had to wait a lot of time for different things and the weather was not good but unfortunately we don't have any control of this. To sum up, the trip was very nice and pleasant.

Maciek

We want to thank all German families and teachers from Europa -Schule for taking care of us, organizing this fantastic visit and getting to know so many great people and new, beautiful places.

***Maciek, Natalia, Joanna(Asia) and Dawid.
See you in Poland in June 2014 !!!***



Cyprus



Destination Eifel

Today I had a fantastic day. I woke up really early because I knew I had to get ready for our big trip. I dressed and got breakfast until it was time to go. Once we arrived at the National park I was very happy because I knew I would have a great time. We met there the park rangers and split into groups. We walked in the park and the tour guide told us that some American trees were brought in the park.

These trees are higher than the local trees and are a threat to the park existing trees because of the amount of sun light they block. Our tour guide was not wearing shoes because as explained to us that being barefoot he gets connected with nature.

Next we had activities. We were split into two students and one had his eyes covered with a scarf and our partner took us to a tree of his choice. We then used our senses until we figure out what kind of tree it was in order to find it when our eyes were uncovered .

I had a great time and learned many new things.

(Dimitris Terpizis)

We started our trip in the bus not knowing what was awaiting us.

When we had finally arrived we were amazed. Having never seen such wonders like the tall and mighty trees we were roaming around taking pictures. Soon enough we were split into groups which made me the only Cypriot in my group. We started off with a game involving the change of habitats from the entrance to deep in the woods. Going deeper inside that territory we were challenged to find fifteen items.

At one point we stopped at a wooden based shelter, we lit a fire and cooked. After a while we ventured further and participated in two other activities. The first one involved two trees (one on the opposite side of the other) and in the middle of a ten square meter circle a bag of goods (treasure).

We had to come up with an idea of how to get the bag using the previous items. And soon we did. The second activity involved teamwork. We had to climb a high wall using each other's help. Soon enough the whole group was on top. At the end of the day we caught the bus back to school.

(Alexandros Chrysostomou)

Activities at school

Today it was an extremely entertaining but educative day too! In the morning when we went to school, we were divided into two groups in order to play several games. At the first game our teacher explained us the meaning of some words.

Each word was connected with a movement. Then we made a big circle. One pupil got in the middle and pointed another pupil from the circle telling him a word from those we had learned before. If the pupil in the middle made the correct movement then he remained in the circle and left the same pupil in the middle of the circle, if not then he would take his position.

After that game, we had a break and then... more activities. We made a circle again. This time each child made a crazy movement while saying his name in order to introduce himself. Following we had to mime his movement he made. That activity was really fun!

(Alexandros Theofanous)



Trip to Aachen

We were on our way and our destination was Aachen. We were going to visit a chocolate factory so we were all in a good mood and very excited. When we had arrived we hurried in the entrance knowing that we had only twenty minutes to shop. We loaded as much chocolate as we could and we went off to the next destination which was an area that was all about Aachen's history.

We started from the baths which were destroyed and then partly renewed because of the Second World War when it received many enemy attacks. We kept going and we saw many historical buildings. After a long walk we headed back to the bus.

We had learned so much about Aachen's history and our bags were so full of chocolates.

(Alexandros Chrysostomou)

After we had our lunch in School, we went to Aachen. There, we visited the church of the town and learned many interesting information about it. The guide explained to us the history of the church, which was the following:

"When the church was in the middle of its creation the authorities paying for it, run out of money. Then the devil turned into a rich man and promised them that he would pay for the completion of the church but as an exchange he would take the first soul that would enter the church, at its opening day. The people of the town didn't have any other choice so they took the money and completed the building of the church.

The big day arrived that the church would open, but nobody wanted to get first inside. Then a wise priest thought that the devil didn't specify whose soul would sacrifice, so he suggested letting a wolf first enter the church. The devil saw a shadow on the door, attacked

the wolf and got his soul. When he realized that he was deceived he got so angry that he hit the door at so much strength that he left a big crack on the entrance door which can be seen still today!" It was a magnificent church and I always remember this day since it was so interesting!

(Alexandros Theofanous)



Iceland

We have enjoyed working on this project. We saw introductions from the schools in the other countries. We are looking forward to talking to the other students next year. When our teachers returned we got to see a lot of pictures from Germany and the national parks there.



Germany

some of the coments from the Host School

I liked that we did a lot of things together and I was so excited that people from so many different countries visited us.

(Laura E.) During the Comenius project we all had a lot of fun together. Now I can speak English better and it was very cool to talk in English to kids from so many different countries.

(Steffen S.)

I liked that I heard so many different languages all the time, but that we could all communicate in English. Now I understand why learning English is so important for me.

(Anna-Lena U.)

I found it great that we learned more about smaller countries like Cyprus, Latvia and Iceland. And the trip to Monschau was the best.

(Jannis H.)

I liked that we could hike in nature and talk to each other in English.

(Julia M.)

After the exchange my English is much better. It was so interesting to get to know other cultures and to show our guests how we live and what our nature is like. I really look forward to seeing the national park of another country.

(Jana S.)

We had a great time with our international guests, The best trip was to Cologne when we climbed the Cathedral and walked around the city together. My exchange student loved Cologne because the people were so friendly.

(Lea L.)

Playing fun games together in the national park was best.

(Jonas K.)

Doing so many nice things like climbing over a high wall and making a barbecue with bread on a stick together with our international guests was so cool.

(Lea P.)

It was great that next to English I also learned a little bit of Turkish.

(Fenia R.)

In the Eifel national park we learned a lot about the forest, different trees and animals and we helped each other over a high wall too. This was very cool.

(Leon S.)

I liked that we learned something about the Eifel national park and that we did so many activities as an international group.

(Max D.)



I have learned a lot of things about all the other European countries. It is really interesting to learn about our cultural varieties.

(Joel)

The best was that we all learned English better and that we could host an international student and show them how we live here in Germany.

(Lena E.)

I learned a lot about different European countries. That was so interesting.

(Lisa B.)

I think the project was great because we got to know so many children from different European countries. I found some new friends.

(Frauke F.)

