

Erasmus+ “Media: Watchdog or Slumdog?”

Isernia, Italy

The purpose of this report is to describe the experience the Romanian students had during the 5th and the 10th of March 2023 while participating in the mobility which took place in Italy, as part of the Erasmus+ programme entitled: “Media: Watchdog or Slumdog?”

There were six Romanian students who took part in this project. They were coordinated by two Romanian teachers from the same school, Colegiul Național “Emanuil Gojdu” in Oradea.

We arrived in Isernia on Saturday (March 5th), after flying from Romania and landing in Rome, where we took a three-hour bus ride. Four of our students were hosted by Italian students, with the remaining two students and teachers staying at a hotel near the school in Isernia.

On Saturday and Sunday, we had free time for visiting the city. The Italian students invited us to explore all the interesting parts of town, including both the old and new parts. We tried their local dishes, therefore becoming more and more familiar with the local culture.

The activities which this project consisted of started on Monday. On the first day of activities, we visited the local schools that were part of the Erasmus+ project, both being vocational high schools. Then, in the second part of the day, after a delicious Italian lunch, we began working on a common project, in teams of five and six students. The six teams were composed of students from all the participant countries: Romania, Italy, Poland, Türkiye and The Netherlands. The project was a presentation about various pieces of news from all the countries previously mentioned on a specific topic, while the range of these topics included: economics and financial news, national politics, foreign news, sports, culture, welfare and science news. We had to examine the news we had found prior to the mobility as well as present it by pointing out the similarities and differences between them.

Afterwards, on Tuesday, we went sightseeing in the city of Naples. We arrived at about 10 o'clock when we began by visiting the old town, full of local merchants and locally-owned cosy cafes. Our guide, the principal of Isernia's high school, also showed us various landmarks, such as Piazza del Gesù Nuovo, Gesù Nuovo Church, Centro Storico di Napoli, Piazza Bellini and Santa Chiara Monastery. Then we had lunch at a Napolitano pizzeria and went to the Royal Naples neighbourhood. We stopped at the Royal Palace, which had once been the residence of the monarch of the Kingdom of Naples and later the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. What's more, we had the chance to visit Piazza del Plebiscito and Castel dell'Ovo. We spent the last few hours exploring the commercial centre, near Galleria Umberto I, where we found nice souvenirs.

On Wednesday, we finalised the presentations which we began two days earlier. Once the presentations had been completed, we went on a guided tour of the historical centre of Isernia and we had a meeting with the Deputy Mayor of Isernia at the City hall, where we learnt more about the local policy-making and history of the city and region.

On Thursday, there was a conference in the aula of the school, where we held our presentations. Furthermore, we put forward the research we had carried out at home, before our arrival to Italy. The main features of research included a survey about media: how well students differentiate misinformation from factual pieces of information, how students perceive the importance of media in today's society and what platforms students use in order to get informed.

While being on our last day there, we went on a trip to Rome. We arrived in the city centre at noon, and our first activity was a role-play game, organized by the European Parliament. Each of us represented an elected member of the European Parliament from four fictional parties. We had to split up into two committees, each specialised in a different field. After having done our research on the issue at hand, we had to debate the problem between us and reach a compromise. We then sent the final proposal to the European Council, which after two rounds of negotiations was agreed upon by both institutions. Following this activity, we had time to see the city centre of Rome. We stopped at the Roman Forum, Colosseum, Colonna Traiana, Fontana di Trevi, the Pantheon, Piazza Navona, the bank of the river Tiber and Piazza di Spagna.

We began our trip home the next morning, arriving in Romania on that day, in the evening. Overall it was a long but rewarding journey, and we were glad to be back home, even though the Italian students were amazing hosts and we had a wonderful time in Italy.

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