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Lifelong Learning Programme

BIODIVERSITY OF RIVERS

Meeting in Limassol – Agios Antonios 8 to 12 October 2013

St. Anthony's High School hosted the 1st meeting of the European Comenius Program 'Biodiversity of Rivers' from October 8th to October 12th. The program involves the following schools:

1. St. Anthony's Lyceum from Cyprus
2. Prywatne Salezjanskie Lyceum Ogolnoksztalcace, from Poland.
3. Agrupamento de Escolas de Povia de Lanhoso, from Portugal
4. Colegiul tehnic de transporturi auto, from Romania
5. Lycee Boisjoly Potier, from Reunion (France)
6. IES of SAR of Santiago of Compostela, from Spain and
7. Fmv Ozel Erenkou Isik Fen Lisesi, from Turkey

The meeting held in Limassol was attended by 5 of the 7 schools (Cyprus, Poland, Romania, Portugal and France) and it was the first introductory meeting and reorganization of schools for the program. The events started on Tuesday, October 8th with a cocktail for



1st meeting
8th - 12th October
2013

Saint Anthony's Lyceum
Limassol, Cyprus



Comenius program
Lifelong learning programm



acquaintance purposes and the opening ceremony of the meeting was held on Wednesday, October 9th at St Anthony's Lyceum



Before the opening ceremony a school tour was given by the Head of the School and the Cyprus program coordinator, Mr. Nicolas Nicolaou (physics teacher). The guests expressed their amazement at the many active research groups that we have in our school and for the structures that we do with students.





The opening ceremony began with greetings from the Head of St. Anthony's School Maria Theophanous and the Parents' Association representative Mrs. Evanthia Charalambous. Then the schools taking part in the meeting presented their countries, towns and schools to the students via power point presentations.



During this meeting Dr. Andreas Foulis gave a lecture on 'Cyprus' Cultural Heritage before and after 1974', and Mrs Athena Papatheodoulou, research officer of the nonprofit environmental organization Terra Cypria, gave a lecture on 'Biodiversity of Rivers - A snapshot of the rivers of Cyprus'. The first lecture covered our political situation and the Turkish invasion and occupation of the island and the second focused on the biodiversity of rivers in Cyprus. The feedback for the day's events was positive from all the participants.

At the opening ceremony, our school presented a cultural program which included dance and music.



On Wednesday evening a reception was given by the Parents' Association and the school teachers. On the same night we organized an astronomical evening. We used the astronomical telescope and made observations of the night sky under the guidance of the Mr. Alexander Grivas.



Visitors from other countries danced with the students and teachers of our school Cypriot dances to live music (violin and lute).



On Thursday, Oct. 10th we went on a tour to archaeological sites in Limassol and Paphos (Kolossi Castle, Kourion and Aphrodite's Rock). We ended up at Pissouri village.



On Friday, October 11th, the coordinators of the program from all the countries had a meeting in order to decide the next steps for the continuation of the program and what activities will take place in each country until the next meeting which is going to take place in March at Istanbul. At the same time, the foreign students, together with our students, attended classes.



Then the group of students and teachers involved in the program visited the Diaryzos river and the Tsielefos bridge. The students performed some measurements and observations in the river. These that had mostly to do with the scientific part of the program. The whole effort was coordinated by Mrs. Athena Papatheodoulou. The students went to the river taking the measurements themselves so as to have a first contact with the scientific part

of the program. The activities excited the students and of all coordinators of the schools who were with us, and Mrs Athena Papatheodoulou received congratulations from everybody.



More detailed we can say that within the project Comenius «Biodiversity for Rivers» was brief presentation of biodiversity Cypriot rivers, followed by field study. Students and teachers who participated in the program were informed of the general characteristics of river systems as well as of the important species of flora and fauna and the habitats of Cypriot rivers. This was followed by water sampling and assessment of the hydro morphological status of the river. Students also did observations in the microscope, and recognize the species using a key and discussed the adaptations of aquatic species.



All the activities that took place during the program included tours, meetings and contacts with parents, the hosting foreign students by local families, work by foreign students in the classrooms and other educational activities in the morning and in the afternoon. The activities for the first meeting of the Comenius program ended on Saturday, Oct. 12th , 2013.



We will close this report with some experiences from the students as they describe them in their own words.

Our school Saint Antony's Lyceum took part for first time in a Comenius program. Seven students, two from Portugal, two from Reunion, two from Poland and one from Romania, stayed at some of our students' houses. One of those families who hosted people from other countries was our family. We had a really great time with our visitors regardless of the little time we had. In my opinion, this is an experience that we should all have. Because of this experience we had the chance to learn about other different ways of life, cultures and civilizations.

Through an event (opening ceremony), in our school, held on Wednesday, October 9th, we found out from these students more interesting things about

their countries and on the same day, at night, we tasted their food and we danced with them. Simultaneously, through this, they learned the way we amuse ourselves, in Cyprus. We can surely say that, this night we got to know each other better. Lots of emotions.... At first, we were all feeling a little bit uncomfortable but then everything was perfect. We have plenty of beautiful memories from that night (not only that night but this night was the night that all were feeling so close).

The next days, we went together on various excursions in Cyprus in order to show our visitors our country's sights. We didn't stop laughing and having a wonderful time. We also learnt from them, as they learnt from us, many useful things and information. We noticed that the Portuguese behave like we do, that Polish and Romanian students are more serious in what they do and that in Reunion people are more conservative. Something that is very important and we have to mention it, is that we all learnt, the meaning of "diversity" means and the value of accepting people from other countries and other culture.

My family and all the other families that hosted students from the other countries, believe that this experience brought us a lot of positive things and nothing negative. As a result, in the end we didn't want to let them go back to their countries. We know that we will miss them all, and we also believe that they share the same feelings. In these few days that we stayed all together, beyond what we learned in actions that are part of the program of the meeting (taking measurements in rivers, knowing about their countries, their schools) we also created a beautiful friendship, which we hope we will keep forever. It was wonderful.

Closing this I have to say that these days all the teachers and students that were in the meeting (17 students, 10 from Cyprus, 2 from Portugal, 2 from France, 2 from Poland and one from Romania and 13 teachers, 5 from Cyprus, 3 from Romania, 3 from Portugal, 1 from Poland and one from France) we had a fantastic experience, we learned about the educational system of other countries and we all decided to do worthwhile work in following 2 years so that our project to be one of the best Comenius projects.

Nikolas Nikolaou
Cyprus Coordinator of the project
Biodiversity of Rivers