

Comenius Project 2010 - 2012

Common Roots - Common Future

Newsletter Nr.2

October 2011



Dear friends,

During the last academic year and since we published our last newsletter our joint work made good progress and we want to share our experiences with you all.

The project work is well under way and we are sure that we are not only able to fulfill the promises made to our National Agencies but also gave the opportunity to many of our students to learn more about the common roots we all have and to find out more about the future we have to face together.

We have seen our students work together on many different subjects, researching about migration, changes during the last sixty years in many fields and the reasons that led to the changes. They have also done research work about the possibilities the future can offer for them and us all depending on our behaviour towards the environment and the other existing problems. But the most important thing is that they found friends all over Europe!

1



Exchange Visit Wallace Hall Academy to Urspringschule December 2010

From 28th November to 3rd December 2010 seven students and two teachers from Wallace Hall Academy (Scotland) visited Urspringschule (Germany). After a long and distressing journey due to an unplanned night stop in Amsterdam the guests finally arrived at their destination where they were welcomed by their hosts.



Two days before winter had started in full force and so everything was covered in snow and looked like the typical Christmas postcard. So we didn't have any problems getting into the right mood for baking typical German Christmas cookies at the first afternoon.



German and Scottish students and teachers worked together very well and produced ten different types of cookies including the typical Swabian cookie, called "Springerle", which is considered to be difficult to get right. But we had some natural baking talents in the group and got excellent results. After this activity everyone went home to stay with the host family and to relax after the long day.

Tuesday saw all participants back again in school and we started the four planned working groups. We focussed during that meeting on the following topics

- migration to and from Scotland and Germany and the reasons for the migration waves
- eating habits in Scotland and Germany and during the different times
- starting the work on the project's planned recipe book with the traditional recipes we had gathered from our countries by using the recipes that are or were popular in the families
- National and public holidays in Scotland and Germany by comparing the traditions and finding out what is different and what is similar



2

To warm up we started with the questionnaire on quality of life before the groups got under way with their research work. There were different outcomes planned for the groups e.g. a recipe book, power point presentations and a food magazine.

In the afternoon it was time for some shared activity again and we went to the bakery that delivers bread and rolls to the school to learn how to make the Brezels, for which the region is famous. We learned a lot about sustainable agriculture and food production during the tour in the bakery and we produced nearly 300 Brezels there.



As Tuesday was 30th November it was also St. Andrew's day, the National holiday of the Scottish guest and so we had a reception in the evening with teachers and students from Urspringschule and the host families, where we offered some of the cookies we had prepared on Monday and our freshly made Brezels together with other specialities of the region.



3

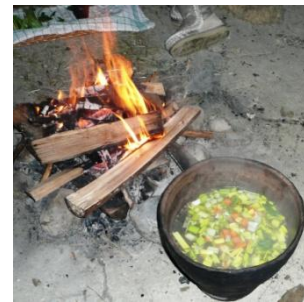


The project work continued on Wednesday and there was the long looked for visit to Ulm with a guided tour through the cathedral and the old town quarters and the possibility to visit the famous Christmas market on the cathedral's precinct and finally the possibility to do some shopping for friends and family, before everyone went back to school for finalizing the project work in the groups. From there everyone went for the well earned meal in a typical pub where the guests and hosts were treated with Cheese Spätzle, another famous dish in the region.

On Thursday we made a journey back in time on our excursion to Bad Buchau, where we visited the "Federsee Museum", which does not only display the findings from the ice age made in the swamps around that lake but also offers various educational programmes related to the ice age.



We had chosen the cooking during the ice age experience and had first to learn how to make fire with the tools available in those times. It was very astonishing for us to see how quick a fire could be built with the primitive tools man had more than 10000 years ago. Next step was to cut all the vegetables that were available so long ago in the region by using only stone tools which were produced by our guide. The meal we were going to cook was a stone age lentil stew.



4

After we had put together all the ingredients we were given a guided tour through the museum and got some more information about the culture of the ice age in the region. Our vegetable stew had to simmer for about three hours before it was ready to eat. It was astonishing for all of us, how tasty it was. Beforehand most of us were very sceptical if we would like it, but we can recommend the recipe and the experience we made that morning.



Ice age experience in every sense of the word meant, it was a lot of snow outside and we felt cold after some time in one of the Neolithic houses, as a fire in the middle of a room without glass in the windows etc. doesn't get as warm as the rooms we are used to. So it was very pleasant to soak in the thermal spa of Bad Buchau after this very interesting experience. After spending three hours there we felt warm enough to go back to school to do the final presentation of the project work in the school's library.

On Friday the whole group met for the last time, to say good bye to the guests and to give the guests some samples of the cookies they had prepared to take home to their school.

Students' Meeting in Belgium February 2011

In the week from 12th to 20th February, students from Xantus Janos School in Budapest and from IT IS "E.Fermi" in Francavilla Fontana (Italy) met in the Belgian partner school "Heilig Hartcollege" in Waregem.



After their arrival in Belgium the guests spent the weekend in their host families and met again on Monday morning in school where they were welcomed by the headmaster and the other teachers and got a guided tour through the school before giving their school presentations and started their project work.

were enjoying a food court with the specialties of the countries involved in the exchange before going out for a bowling night.

On Tuesday everyone went to Ghent for some sightseeing and some free time and the opportunity to do some shopping ...

This meant that the whole Wednesday was dedicated to the project work in the different groups before meeting up for a folkdance session, to learn about the folklore of the other participating countries.

In the morning of Thursday the project work had to be finalized for the presentation to the other groups in the afternoon.

The project groups were:

- Folklore: traditional music and dances (present two traditional songs and two folk stories from each country)
- Investigation into remains from the Romans in your countries
- The impact of the Romans on the language in the countries involved in the meeting
- National identity problems

After all the hard work the visitors and their hosts got the opportunity to visit Bruges on Friday and to learn more about this fascinating town in Flanders.

Coordinators Meeting in Kazanlak, Bulgaria 19.1. – 23.1.2011

In September we had decided to hold the next coordinators meeting in our partner school СОУ “Екзарх Антим I” in Kazanlak in Bulgaria in January.

So we went in the middle of winter to the town of roses – missing the flowers and fragrance which can be experienced during summer time. But we were welcomed by perfect hosts with all the hospitality we could wish for.



It was just an experience getting to Kazanlak by taxi from the airport in Sofia. It was a two and a half hours drive from there through an interesting landscape – when there was no fog! The orientation was a bit difficult for us as all signpost along the streets were in Bulgarian and written in Cyrillic letters. But we learned to recognize at least some during our stay...

... and the taxi driver didn't speak any foreign language we understood

Our hosts had booked us into a nice hotel next to the city centre and within walking distance from the school – so some of us tried to find our way around the town while we were waiting for the other members of the group to arrive with a later flight.

On our first evening we went to a typical Bulgarian restaurant not too far from our hotel and there we got to know the local specialities and we enjoyed ourselves during a very good meal.



The next morning we met also the Norwegian and Icelandic delegation who had arrived in the middle of the night and we were ready to start working. When we were walked over to the school by the Bulgarian colleagues we found out, that it was indeed only a five minutes' walk to get there.

In the school we were greeted by our hosts in the typical Bulgarian way which was impressing and totally new for all of us.



After the reception by the headmaster there was no excuse not to start working and so we evaluated the work done so far and planned all our next meetings to make sure we covered all the topics we had planned to work on with our students.

Our hosts made sure that we didn't only work but got an impression of the local traditions and companies as well. So we visited a cotton factory that produces cotton threads for all purposes as well as very nice and stylish towels for popular brands all over Europe.

The visit to a factory that produces guitars and violins since quite a long time on a very high standard was especially interesting as it covered a subject we had never worked on before and we learned a lot during this visit.

But it was not only, that we visited a factory that made instruments we were also asked by our hosts to do our best in their music studio. We had to learn a Bulgarian song and had to sing it for the production of the first coordinators CD, which will become a number one hit in due time. This is due to the fact that we also had to dress up as Bulgarians and we looked so convincing and sung the song nearly perfect – considering that we didn't understand a single word!



7

Some of the students from the schools' drama club and the students' choir performed for us during a well earned break in the process of discussing the project tasks and impressed us by their high standards.

We were also visiting some popular sights of the area like Mount Shipka. It was a pity that the weather was not so good and that we couldn't enjoy the view from top of the mountain. We learned about the importance of Mount Shipka for the Bulgarian nation and why it is so popular for the region. The excursion also included a visit to the Shipka monastery, where the church was financed by the Russian state to acknowledge the sacrifices made on Mount Shipka.



On two evenings we had to prepare some national dishes for the whole group at Natasha's place. These were two really interesting meals and we could find out, that it is just perfect to have a meal put together with Icelandic, German and Hungarian dishes

or other strange combinations. We definitely enjoyed our international meals.

On our last afternoon we went to Stara Zagora where we visited the brewery that produces the famous Zagorka beer. After that we got the opportunity to do some shopping to bring back some presents to families and friends before we had to leave Kazanlak on Sunday morning to be back to school on Monday where our students were waiting for us and wanted to know what we had seen and planned for the next academic year.

Waregem to Schelklingen February 2011

At 8 am, we were expected at the parking in front of our school. We had to do a trip of 9 hours in the bus. When we arrived in Urspring all the German exchange students were waiting to welcome us. Everybody left with their hosts, except the people who had to stay in the boarding school. The next day, we started with our projects. We had to do projects about food, migration, social security and politics. At 9.15 we had a second breakfast with all the other students of the school. After lunch we went to Blaubeuren, where we visited the Blautopf. It is very blue water and it is very famous in Germany. In the evening the boys went playing football and the girls did support them.



At Tuesday, we went to Grafeneck. which had previously been an asylum for crippled people, was turned by the Nazis into an extermination facility .

8

After our visit to Grafeneck, we went to Becka Beck. In the bakery we get some information about how they make bread and we learned also how to make pretzels (something special of the region). After our visit at the bakery, we went back to Urspring for the reception with typical dishes from Belgium and Germany.



Wednesday, we took the train to Stuttgart. First we visited the impressive Mercedes-Benz museum. I think it was the most beautiful museum that everybody already was gone to. Afterwards we went to the city center, and we did some shopping. That was very fun for all the girls!



Thursday we had to do the whole day project work, but in the evening we were rewarded for our hard work with a school disco in de 'Saustall'. It was very fun with a teacher and some pupils as DJ and outside there was a campfire. Everyone was enjoying the disco...

On Friday we took the bus to Aalen, where we visited a Roman Museum. In the museum we had a guided tour and at the end we could dress us like real Romans.

In the afternoon we went swimming in a beautiful swimming pool with huge slides and a warm water pool outside. When we arrived back in Urspring we had to do our presentations about the projects. After the presentations we went eating a typical Swabian meal in a local pub.

On Saturday we got a guided tour through Ulm. In the afternoon, the most of the group went to a restaurant where we have eaten the largest pizza we had ever seen. In the afternoon we all climbed the 768 steps of the cathedral. It was difficult but the view was beautiful. Then we went ice skating to amuse us and as nice end of the week we went to a big fun spa.

And unfortunately, it was already soon Sunday, departure day. We left Urspring again at 8 am for a trip of 9 hours.

Thank you Urspring for this week we will never forget, Belgian exchange students!

9

Exchange Belgium-Sykkylven February 2011



We're writing February 21st of 2011.

Half past two pm February 13th 2011, ten students and two teachers of the Holy Heart College of Waregem, Belgium, meet at the railway station of Waregem to depart for Oslo, first by train, then plane. It is a nice and slightly summery afternoon. Once arrived at Oslo – it's minus 10°C – another plane will take them to Aalesund, where a taxi cab is waiting for them and will drive them to a place from where they'll take the ferry to Sykkylven.



That is where our story begins. ‘We arrived at midnight on the other side of the fjord, where our hosts and their parents were waiting for us. As a matter of fact, we were pretty tired and when we got home, we went straight on to our beds and fell asleep to be fit the day after. In the morning we had a healthy breakfast and afterwards set off for school, well-nourished, to arrive there at a quarter past eight am. After having introduced ourselves, we showed the pupils and teachers our presentations we'd prepared and afterwards we were told what the programme would look like for the whole week. We went skiing, we cooked, we ate, we visited Aalesund for its architecture and its city aquarium, and of course – there was still enough time left – we finished our project work which was imposed by the Comenius exchange programme.

10

We had a great time together with the Norwegians, Germans, Bulgarians, Hungarians and Belgians who all came together for the Comenius project. By half past two pm, school's out in Norway and what else would we've been doing in the afternoon than visiting our friends and their hosts and partying in the evening. Every day, we had either a home party or a banqueting or we just stayed home and had a lovely family-night during which our hosts' parents made a nice dinner while we were talking about so many things such as the similarities and differences between our cultures. On the last day of our international adventure, some went visiting the highest mountain in Sykkylven while others went overhauling the fjords of Geiranger. The Norwegians call it the “Alps of the North”, for its white-topped peaks.

In the evening, we went back partying of course, but this time it was a big “hatterfest” on which everyone had to wear a hat. It was the biggest party in Sykkylven in four months. Luckily no one got really hung-over.

But of course, all good things come to an end too quickly, for the day after we already had to pack our luggage to go back to Belgium again. After having a tonic breakfast we were brought to the place where the ferry dropped us the week before and again had to take to the other side of the fjord. We had a very emotional farewell with lots of crying and so on. With the consolation that we'd see our hosts again in four weeks time, we departed for Waregem on Sunday February 20th.

Sykkylven VGS hosts European exchange project

On Monday 14 February Sykkylven VGS welcomed pupils and teachers from Hungary, Bulgaria, Germany and Belgium in the context of yet another Comenius project. Coincidence or not, it all started on Saint Valentine, the day on which we celebrate *love and affection between intimate partners*.



And this is exactly what this week was all about: understanding and respect.

As so often this meant looking behind the stereotypes first. Did you know for example that not all Norwegians are tall and blond? Or that not every German survives on sausages and beer? And even though Belgium has (unsuccessfully) been trying to form a new government for 8 months, the Belgian delegation did not prove to be unreasonable or stubborn.

Believe it or not, but this exchange week taught us that in spite of different backgrounds we have a talent for being friends.

Europeans invade Sykkylven (Hedda, Anne-Sophie)

11

Last week, you may have heard about or seen pupils from different countries here in Sykkylven. If you didn't read local newspaper last week, you might have wondered what they were doing here.

For one week, our village has been the "home" of 28 foreign students with their teachers. Pupils from Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany and Hungary have visited pupils in the 1st and 2nd grade at Sykkylven VGS. During the stay, they lived with their Norwegian host families and the Norwegian students are also going to visit their guests in their home countries this year.



Education and Culture
Lifelong learning programme
COMENIUS

Comenius is a program for pupils in all levels of school education in different countries within Europe. The students who are participating get the chance to cooperate with students from other countries. Both individuals and institutions who are participating get financial support from the EU

The program was created in 1995 and some main aims are to improve and increase the mobility of pupils and teachers across the EU, to strengthen partnerships between schools in different countries and to encourage language learning.



The official program (Henrikke, Jens- Petter)

The program for the week was interesting and exciting, with both fun arrangements and some more school-related work. Monday was the first day at school for all of us, except the Hungarians, who didn't arrive before Monday evening. We started the day with presentations of the different schools and countries, and got to

know each other. After lunch we were divided into groups and started on our project work. Each group was a mix of people from different countries, and had their own subject like language, migration and food.

On Tuesday all the students both from the Comenius project, and the others students in the first grade at our school, went to Fjellsetra to do skiing activities. The students were free to choose between downhill and cross-country. Not everybody had experience from skiing earlier, so the main point was to have fun – and we are almost sure that everybody did. Even though many fell several times, and it perhaps was a little bit colder than we had hoped for, the smiles never left our faces. Except from skiing, many of the students also enjoyed a nice lunch around the fire with sausages and marshmallows.



12

Wednesday we continued to work on our projects, before we met in the school kitchen after lunch. Every country was supposed to prepare one cold dish that's traditional in their home place. This evening we had maybe the biggest social event in the whole week – a gathering of students, parents and teachers. We ate good food, played games and enjoyed ourselves all evening.

On Thursday we worked on our projects as usual until lunch, and then we went to a fieldtrip to Ålesund. We visited both the Jugendstil-museum and the Aquarium.

The foreign students and the Norwegian students thought that both places were very interesting, but feeding penguins at aquarium was for many the highlight of the day. After the trip arranged by the school, most of the students stayed behind in Ålesund for shopping and sightseeing.

Friday was the last day at school together for the most of us, except from the Bulgarians who left on Thursday. Before lunch each group presented their project, and we were all pleased with the results. After lunch there were arranged sports and other activities for the students who still hadn't left.

Behind the scenes: the unofficial programme of the Comenius exchange (Miriam, Charles)

When we landed in Ålesund, I thought "It is extremely cold here", but when I told that to my exchange student she said, "Oh, well in fact it is the warmest day we had for about three months"- It was minus 10 degrees Celsius. The next day on our way to school, I fell over like three times because of the slippery road but my exchange student walked on the ice like it was nothing. We were walking there for about half an hour and suddenly I noticed how beautiful nature is in Sykkylven. So I said, "It is as if you are living in a postcard" and her answer was "Yes it is, but I already got used to it". Her mother told me that tourists often get afraid of these high mountains. She said: "foreign people are scared that the mountains will fall down on them". But I said: "Well, I think they look amazing and I'm not scared at all". Actually they reminded me of Tacos, these little triangle-shaped crisps. Speaking of which, we got stuffed with these tasty things on every home party so far. Eating habits in Norway are quite different from our own eating habits, usually we have three meals a day, but in Norway people often take five meals a day and what's more they already have dinner at five o'clock which in our country actually is almost lunch time. Nevertheless there are no difficulties to have fun, make new friends and just have a real good time together.

Comenius fairytale

This is a link to the filmed version of the Comenius fairytale: The 3 Billy Goats Gruff produced in Sykkylven at the student meeting there in February 2011

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qrH8ZPrlu9M>

Diary of a Belgian delegation in Iceland February 2011

Sunday morning, at 8am, everyone was fresh and lively on the car park of the college.

So thirteen adventurers went towards Lille, all hoping for a great week. Around 4 pm local time we landed in the Airport of Keflavik. There were 11 enthusiastic exchange students waiting for us. During the half hour we were together in the car to Reykjavik, the first connection was made. Everyone was very warmly received by their host families. After dinner, we had the idea to do some ice-breaking activities. In the area was the most famous hot-dog stall in Iceland. Bill Clinton himself was said to have a hot dog over there.

On Monday, our day started in the geography classroom where an apparently popular supervisor and a gullible Guðjón welcomed us at their school. A ringing signal announced the break, so everyone trickled to the canteen. Eva guided us through Reykjavik in the afternoon. We stopped at a harbour, the parliament and two churches. Back at school, our hosts surprised us with Icelandic specialties. With a little bit pride, I can now write that we all swallowed sour whale, testicles, sheep bowels, sheep head and rotten shark. We can even strongly recommend it. We ended the day with a visit to the biggest swimming pool of Reykjavik. It was like bathing in heaven when the snow was melting on our wet hair in the nicely hot water.

We started Tuesday with project work. The purpose of the group work was to find the differences and similarities between the Belgian and Icelandic culture in terms of names, holidays, folk tales and travelling. The Belgian and Icelandic people were mixed and so we got to know each other better. In the afternoon we took a bus trip to a natural energizing company, where they get energy from flowing water, a volcanic crater and a hot spring. We finished the day with cooking in groups in one of the families. Then we went to the top of a hill, where we tested all possible ways to slide down. One went over his head, the other slipped yards away without his sled. Some even ventured on a snowboard.

After all the preparatory work, there was a lot of stress when we had to present our work for a filled auditorium at school. This stage fright proved to be unfounded: both presentations were welcomed with praise. Afterwards we let the tension fade away in the school cafeteria, where we enjoyed a quick snack and a soft drink. However we didn't stay there for a long time. We had a free hour, so it was a wonderful opportunity to explore the school swimming pool. In the afternoon we lived out our imagination on the famous "fairy rocks". According to the Icelandic legends, there live evil elves. We ended the evening with a nice dinner with our host families.

On Thursday, we had to be in school at 10 o'clock, to make a walk in Ellidaár Valley. This is an old glacier valley close to the school. We walked for about an hour. There we almost slid down to the river below the valley. After walking through 'the woods' we went back to school. We had a little free time to eat something and sit together in the school canteen. At 1 pm we were expected at the bus station to go to the National museum. In the museum we could stroll and taste a bit of the Icelandic history and culture. After the visit we had some time to visit Reykjavik centre. At 5 pm we took the bus back to school and went cooking at a guest's place, like the days before. After cooking we went all to Unnstein, Toms exchange student. There we spent the rest of the evening, until we were sent away at 0 o'clock, because of the noise. Everybody went home to be rested for the next day.



Friday: Again we were expected early at school to begin a busy day. First we had to present the things we prepared with the Icelandic people. The presentations were about a couple of interesting things, like the migration between Iceland and celebrating Easter in the two countries. After the presentations our kind teachers made a walk to visit some Icelandic horses. After midday we had to be at 12h45 at school to take the bus to one of the highlights of our trip, the Blue Lagoon. We could relax a couple of hours in this natural relaxing water. Some of us even dared to try a mud mask. Our Icelandic friends organised a party to end the unforgettable week. The atmosphere was very good and then we saw what nobody dared to dream about, the northern light. This was the perfect closure for a more than a successful day, a successful week.

Saturday (@Iceland)

Normally, the 7th day on the Icelandic soil would be a day to spend some time with the host family. So everybody would do something else. Yet, some of the Icelandic exchange students arranged a trip to go and see some beautiful things of nature that we hadn't seen during the past week, like Gullfoss Falls. We reached these falls after a bus ride of about 2 hours. That might sound a bit boring, but we already were close friends with everybody so there was a good atmosphere. At the Gullfoss Falls there was a lot of snow and that made the view even more wonderful. Some of the brave among us dared to take off their shirt and stand the ice-cold wind so the others could take an abnormal picture with a great background. Then the sightseeing-tour continued. We went on to the geyser Strokkur. Many tourists gather here to take a nice shot of this every 10 minutes erupting geyser. After this wonderful piece of natural beauty we went looking for a snack in the nearby shop before we went home again. In the evening most of the group gathered around to enjoy the hot open-air swimming pools for the last time. When we were all in harmony and peace with ourselves we had 'Singstar'-night to finish off a wonderful week. There was a lot of laughing and of course singing, but the best part of this night was the fact that we were one big group of friends...

Sunday(@Iceland 2 Belgium)

As expected everyone was all set to make the trip back to Belgium at a quarter to five in the morning. Nobody seemed tired, but in fact nobody had taken any sleep, because we kept the 'Singstar'-night on until we had to gather at the bus station. After saying 'goodbye' and 'see you in a month' we took a crowded bus to the Keflavic Airport. Before we had left some of the people missed their time in Iceland already. When we arrived at KA we went to the check-in point and then had something for breakfast which we bought with our last pieces of Icelandic Krona. But then our time had come, we had to leave the Icelandic island. When boarding the plane everyone was a bit sad, because nobody wanted to leave this beautiful country. But when we had taken our seat, there was no time to think about it, because then the tiredness of the past week had stricken us. Some of our Belgians had a sleep on the 3 hours flight and others watched a movie to pass the time. But still, nobody was happy with the fact that we were leaving Iceland. Arriving at the Airport of Paris, we had to wait for 3 hours before we could take the TGV to Lille. When we were waiting we got the assignment to write this report and so we started to complete it while everything was still fresh in our minds. When those 3 hours had passed we went on to the TGV-platform where we noticed some unhappy news. Our train was 50 minutes late due to a suicide attempt. We started to play cards to pass the time and then finally we boarded the train. When we arrived at Lille, everyone had mixed feelings. Surely, everyone was happy to see his/her parents, but yet we missed our Icelandic friends...



The Hungarian Job (Belgium to Hungary March 2011)

Sunday: We arrived in Budapest at 8 o'clock. We were all very tired after a whole day of travelling. That same night everyone went home for lunch and they got acquainted with their host families.

Monday: The next morning we had to be in school at half past eight. First they showed us the school and we were also allowed to attend classes. After that we had to attend to some project work. The Hungarian students had to compare their schools with ours and vice versa. It took until about a quarter past two and then we had a



bus ride through the city. It was very interesting because we saw some beautiful buildings. Then the school day was over. In the evening we went to a cafe and after that we went to bed. Everyone was exhausted ... But glad.



Tuesday: After a good night's rest everybody was excited to start a new day. We were in school at 9 o'clock and then the project work started again. But this time, it was a little bit different.

Instead of doing work on the computers we had to cook our own traditional Hungarian meal. It was very funny because we all did it together and there was a very good atmosphere. At noon, we had to eat our own meals. Some were good, and some were terrible.

At 2 o'clock we visited Castle District. There was also the opportunity to visit some little shops. In the evening, everyone went to Adel's place for a sleepover. It was fun.

Wednesday: We had to be at school at 9 o'clock. There was a trip to the parliament on the program. We were first checked and then we got a guided tour. The building was beautiful! In the afternoon, the teachers taught us a traditional Hungarian song. There was also a dance. Everybody was

dancing. It was very funny. At 3 o'clock we had to go to the Market Hall, it's a famous food market. After we visited that, we went to a pub to drink something. Then everyone went home to get ready to go to a disco.

Thursday: We had to wake up early because the school planned a trip to the Danube Bend. Two students of the school were our guides. For lunch, we went to a medieval restaurant, after having visited a medieval tournament. There we also tasted some wine. In the evening we all went to a café.

Friday: It was our last school day in Hungary. A visit to the synagogue was on the program. Nele had problems to enter because she was wearing shorts. But after all, it was all right. Then we had to go to a museum. At 12 o'clock we ate in an all-in restaurant. The food was very good there. In the evening everybody went to the 'Pink'-club. It's a famous RnB-club in Hungary. It was a long night.

Saturday: everyone could sleep as long as they wanted because there was no school. Then it was time to pack our stuff. In the afternoon everybody went to Judith's place. We watched a movie, listened to some music,...

Sunday: At 3 o'clock a.m. we had to go to the airport. Then we said goodbye to our exchange students and took the plane back to Belgium. It was an unforgettable week and we will definitely meet each other again in the future.



18

Norway to Bulgaria April 2011

Internationalization is increasingly widespread in the world and gaining a greater extent within many areas. Sykkylven high school has in recent years been involved in a project called Comenius. Through this project students get familiar with other cultures, languages and countries.

5 girls from general studies at Sykkylven upper secondary school chose to enroll. The country they would have learned about was Bulgaria.

5:00am: 5 girls and a teacher, Peder Ulla, took the Aursnes ferry. Expectations were sky high and tension peaked. No more than 4 flights we had on board to come to Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria. The airline had, of course, top it all manage to leave our luggage in Germany, which meant we had to manage a day without our own luggage (Note: 5 girls left). Then there were more stress than the tension that was on top.

After a couple hours' drive from the airport, we were well ahead in Kanzasluk, where we were greeted by the students we would be living with. They were very excited, and were happy to show us their city.

Kanzasluk is known for Bulgaria's bid for the rose oil industry, and we noticed quickly. Everywhere in the streets there were the rose scents, oils, soaps, candles, etc. for sale. The first day we were at school. We noticed that the difference between the schools there and

the schools in Norway was great. Although the school itself was great, many pupils and teachers were not as good in English as we are accustomed to. Toilet was also nothing to brag about where they were just a hole in the ground. The Bulgarians think a little bit more for hygiene than comfort.



At school we had to paint eggs in different colors. It is a kind of tradition they do, that will bring happiness and good health. Tradition takes us back to Mary Magdalene and Jesus Christ time. The tradition is that one should paint the first egg is red. When it has dried, the oldest of the family had to "draw" a cross on his forehead of the other in the family. This is supposed to bring happiness and health.



This was something new for us Norwegian, but we thought it was nice but maybe a bit special tradition.

Furthermore, the program went out on tour in the city. Kazanlûk is known for "The Thracian kings valley". The valley is full of graves from 400-200 century BC It was instructive to us from Norway to see these graves. In many of the graves were found in great mural, by kings, priests and knights makers as well as gold and silver items. The graves tell a lot about the history of the city and is important for the population.

The Bulgarian students took us to the Tyulbe Park, where the actual Kazanlûk grave lies. It is closed to the public, but close to it is a grave that is the exact replica, which is open. It said one of the students the history behind this grave, and it shows how much they can about the history of their city.

Although we were on the round trip about every day, there was also a lot of time for shopping, which really appealed to us 5 girls. Bulgaria is a cheap country for us who live in Norway, so we utilized the opportunity to shop as much as possible. Suitcases had already overload after the first two days.

After a week in Bulgaria, we were to experience a new culture, new cuisine, new traditions and increase our knowledge within the language and history. All were agreed that the week had been great, but we longed home to Norwegian waters and the mother's coarse bread. Comenius project is a good project. It is very educational for students, but also for teachers. We communicate and get friends around Europe, and our language knowledge is greater. Comenius project is a recommendation that is worth to recommend to all pupils at Sykkylven high school. You will experience adventures that you will always remember.

Students Meeting in Hungary April 2011



Just before the Easter holidays were about to start students from Urspringschule Schelklingen in Germany, Sykkylven vidaregaande skule in Norway and from the Bulgarian school Ekzarh Antim I. in Kazanlak were meeting for a week of project work in Xantus Janos School in Budapest in Hungary.

All the exchange students were staying in host families and were living all over Budapest with their hosts. During the weekend they enjoyed home hospitality with various programmes organized by the hosts.

On Monday morning all participants met in the centre of Budapest to start the project work in Xantus Janos School. For warming up the students had to answer a questionnaire which was done as an interview with their exchange partners followed by the schools' presentations of the guests. The hosts guided the visiting students through their school.

As the students had been allocated to the different workshops before coming to Budapest it was easy to start the work after a short introduction about the outcome of the workshop. There were four different workshops

- the comparison of proverbs starting from the commonly used language English
- the average family – a research about the family structure and the changes in the family structure since the 1950s in the participating countries
- Modern food: food “migration”, healthy food, popular dishes today
- Modern migration and its consequences in our schools – making a video

Everybody worked very hard on the tasks given, as the time seemed to be too short to get all the things we had in mind done properly. There was a video to be filmed with the interviews with students with a migration background, recipes for the recipe book had to be translated, articles for the glossy magazine needed research work as well as the research into the average family over the last 60 years. The proverb group had to go through an enormous amount of proverbs in different languages and all the work had to be documented by each group to show the others what had been done during the meeting and where the students from the other project partner schools had to continue.

In the evening we had a party together in the school and we learnt a Hungarian song and tried some Hungarian folk dance together before we got some Hungarian food which had been prepared by the parents and the school kitchen.



On Tuesday each group had to cook a typical meal from their country for all the other participants. This was made possible by using the schools cooking facilities for groups of students and with the help from the kitchen staff who had organized all the ingredients we had asked for before we arrived. A special thank goes to the chef of the school kitchen and his team!



It was much fun to prepare the dishes and to see what the other groups were doing to prepare their special menu. The recipes were collected later and everything was not only photographed but also arranged into an international buffet lunch for all of us and the students and teachers of the hosting school.

So we felt we had earned ourselves some time outside the schools premises and we enjoyed the city tour with the schools bus and some students from Xantus Janos School showed us the highlights of their wonderful town.



Norwegian meal

Hungarian meal

German meal

On Wednesday we visited the synagogue in Dohanyi street in the morning and got a very interesting introduction into the history of the Jewish community of Hungary and into the history of the synagogue by a very friendly lady.



In the afternoon we continued our project work and there were already some very nice results to be seen and the groups started to prepare their presentations for Friday.

For the next day our hosts had planned a visit to the Danube bend for the guests and some guiding students. We went to Esztergom, where we visited the cathedral and had a wonderful view at the surrounding landscape. We learnt that on the other side of the Danube we were seeing Slovakia and that Esztergom was the capital of Hungary from the 10th to the 13th century.

22

Our next stop was Visegrad, a nowadays small country town located on the Danube north of Budapest, which was seat of the Hungarian kings in the 14th century. The remains of the castle were partly rebuilt and today there are medieval tournaments held for the tourists – a spectacle not to be missed as the group performing the tournament does a brilliant job. This was followed by a medieval meal in a restaurant at the foot of the castle hill before we went on towards our last stop at the town of Szentendre. The town has Roman roots and was a centre of the Hungarian Serb community from the 16th century. Today it is famous for its museums, galleries and artists. There are also a big number of shops, selling souvenirs for tourists. At that point everybody could get some presents for the family and friends at home.

On Friday we had to present our project work to the other groups and students and teachers from Xantus Janos School, which we did proudly.

This was followed by writing evaluating comments from the students and then we went off for our last guided tour during our visit, the visit to the Hungarian Parliament. After waiting for some time – watching a demonstration next to the parliament meanwhile – we were shown the interior of the parliament, which was built in the late 19th century in the Gothic



Revival style, similar to the Palace of Westminster by Imre Steindl. It is one of the tallest buildings in Budapest and it is situated on the Danube. The great ornamental staircase and the central hall as well as the huge chambers of the Lower House and the Upper House are very impressive to all visitors.

Our visit to Budapest and our partner school there ended with a meal in a Hungarian restaurant, where we could taste most of the specialties of the Hungarian cuisine – if we would have had enough space in our stomachs. Then it was time to say good bye to our new friends and a wonderful city, knowing that we would welcome our hosts as our guests in three weeks time in Germany.

Students Comments on the Exchange Week in Budapest

I have had a great week here in Budapest. My host family is very kind and friendly and they take very good care of me.

At school we have been to a lot of sightseeing tours around the city which has been interesting. Budapest is a beautiful city, especially by night. It has also been fun to learn about a whole new culture.

The Comenius project has definitely been a great experience. ☺

Hope to come back sometime!

A week in Hungary

First of all I want to thank you for a great week here in Hungary. It was fun and I learned a lot of new things and of course about the culture.

You have done a very good job to make this week fantastic. I have enjoyed every single minute, and it is so sad, that it is over now ... Thanks again for this week!

I definitely want to come back ☺

I enjoyed this week with the other students from different countries, but I think there was too much project work; but it was a wonderful week... thank you!

This week has been great. I love it here in Budapest, it's so beautiful and here are so many nice people.

My host family has taken good care of me and showed me a lot of typically Hungarian things. I came here to get to know the culture and to see how they live. The information was good and I have seen a lot of beautiful places and buildings. I loved the sightseeing, because I'm interested in seeing new places and in discovering new cities and towns.

I liked that my host family lived far from school and that I could try different types of transportation.

The project was also good and I think that everyone did a great job! Everyone who has attended to this year's Comenius project has been so nice and welcoming.

I really liked the middle age performance and the malls. Thanks for a wonderful time here in Hungary!

I think it was a very nice project work. They were all friendly. And Comenius is a good project, you can learn much about the culture or the people who live there.

This Comenius program was very great, we could meet new people and they were all very nice, and we had a lot of fun sightseeing and showing them our city and everything that is interesting in Budapest. ☺

I liked the project work and that the different nations are all together. The sightseeing was very interesting and the people were all very nice.

I think the project topics were very good! We worked hard, but it was funny. I liked the nice weekend with the host family. I'm very happy to have been at David's family – they were very kind to me. I loved the sightseeing during the day and at night ;) . Budapest is a very beautiful city where you can get and do everything. The only bad thing was that the weather was so cold. I hope it will be warmer in Germany when the Hungarians will come to visit us.

Hungary to Germany May 2011

Just a week after the Easter holidays in Germany the Hungarian guests and their teacher arrived in Urspring, where they were met by their hosts. Everyone was happy to see each other again, as we had started working together just four weeks before in Hungary. Most of the guests stayed in the boarding area and so they had to find their way around in the school community.

On Sunday we decided to have a day trip to Lake Constance with our guests and we had chosen a day with the perfect weather for that intent.



The first stop was on the Mainau Island – a flower paradise with subtropical climate, with many different habitats and the plants going with them. It was still the time for the spring flowers like tulips and rhododendrons, but we also saw the first roses in bloom next to an immense amount of other flowers.

We were lucky to see the orchid exhibition which was shown the last day and we enjoyed the butterflies in the butterfly house before we went for lunch in a local pub in the middle of the woods.

After that there was some free time in Constance, visiting the sights and sitting on the shore of the lake enjoying the sunshine. A ferry boat brought us to the other side of the lake from where we went back home.





Project work started on Monday morning in the school's library and we had chosen to follow up some of the topics we started in Budapest, working on them from a different view.



- Modernisation 1950 – 2010: researching the past of the countries and learning about the main events and their impact on our life nowadays
- Sustainable ways of life were another topic, where we focussed on renewable energies and their advantages and disadvantages as well as on a sustainable approach to our resources for food and lifestyle
- The recipe book and articles for the glossy magazine were the topics for the third group: they had to find the layouts for the recipes which were collected and contributed from all partner schools as well as a title and a

25

layout for the so called glossy magazine – which got the working title “A Taste of Life”

In the afternoon we had a date at the local bakery that supplies Urspringschule with bread, rolls and cakes . The bakery is focussed on sustainable production of their products and we learnt a lot about the advantages of sustainable food production. After that we were shown how to make Brezels, a Swabian specialty, and we made more than 200 Brezels which we brought back for the German-Hungarian buffet we had planned for the evening in school. All the boarding students and teachers had the opportunity to sample some special Hungarian food, which the guests had brought from home.



On Tuesday we continued our project work until early afternoon, when we left for a climbing experience, which is called “Kletterwald”, where you can go climbing in the woods facing different levels of trail difficulty. We had much fun there and it made us all very hungry, so we enjoyed our barbecue afterwards very much.



Wednesday was the day for visiting Ulm with the cathedral, the fishermen's quarter – seeing the Danube at a much smaller size (for the Hungarians) and imagining sending a message in a bottle back home! And there was also some free time for shopping and walking through the town.

As Thursday was the day of presenting the results of our work we had to work concentrated to get everything finalized before leaving for a short visit to Blaubeuren, where we saw the monastery and the big source "Blautopf".

The presentations in front of some members of the school and the other groups went very well and we were very satisfied with the outcome of the week.

This meant, that the last day could be spent sightseeing in Stuttgart, the capital of the county of Baden-Württemberg, with a visit to the Mercedes Museum and some free time for everyone.

Early on Saturday morning the school minibus brought the guests to the airport – and we all want to stay in touch, as we all share very happy memories of the two weeks in Budapest and in Urspring and we have learnt a lot about the other country and its culture and its people.

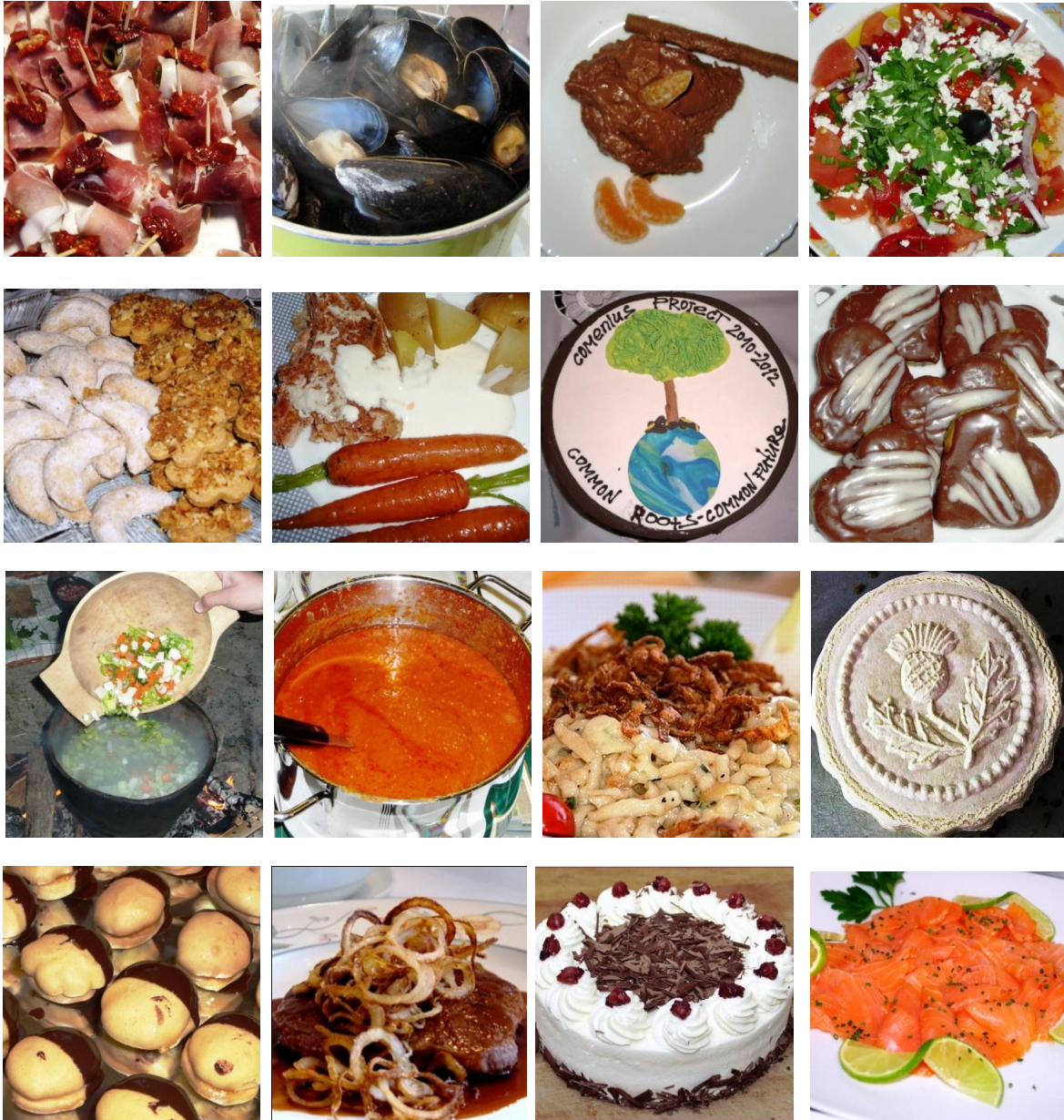


26

The European Recipe Book

All over the last academic year we collected recipes which are typical for the various countries involved in our project. And we were not only collecting recipes, we were also working on these recipes and cooked a lot of the dishes you will find in this book we want to present at the final meeting in March 2012 in Waregem.

There is a first glimpse of the book on the next two pages, the title and two recipes from Belgium and Germany which complement one another in the way that the leftovers from one recipe are one of the main ingredients of the other ...



My European Recipe Book



Recipes collected by students and teachers during the
COMENIUS-Project "Common Roots - Common Future"
 in the years 2010 - 2012

Belgium Mousse au Chocolat

Ingredients:

Per 20 gram of bittersweet chocolate you need one egg white and one spoon of sugar.

For 4 persons:

100gr of bittersweet (dark) chocolate

5 egg whites

5 spoons of sugar



Method:

Melt the chocolate gently (be careful not to overheat the chocolate). You can use the microwave for that.

Once the melted chocolate has cooled slightly, whip the egg whites in a medium bowl until they are foamy and beginning to hold a shape. Sprinkle in the sugar and beat until soft peaks form.

Gently stir in the melted chocolate until evenly blended.

Let the mixture rest in the fridge for at least an hour before serving.

Using the left over egg yolks for

Orange Cookies

Ingredients:

- 8 egg yolks
- 100 g powdered sugar
- 175 g plain flour
- Orange jelly
- Dark chocolate coating



Method:

Beat egg yolks and sugar until thick and creamy, add the flour and put small heaps on a baking parchment. Bake them with 170°C for about 8 minutes. They should be still yellow.

Let the cookies cool down and coat half of them with a bit of orange jelly and stick the other half to the coated cookie. Let them dry a bit and melt the chocolate coating. Dip the cookies with one half in the chocolate and let them dry before storing them in a tin.

MORE RECIPES WILL BE COLLECTED IN OUR RECIPEBOOK BY THE END OF THIS ACADEMIC YEAR