

Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup>  
January 2023

# SWEDISH EXCHANGE

Erasmus+  
project

May 1<sup>st</sup> - May 7<sup>th</sup> 2022

Julie Hagman, Mathilde Hamacher

## Introduction

What is the Erasmus+ project?

The Erasmus+ project is a project run by the European Commission. It has a strong focus on social inclusion and young people's participation in democratic life and the future Europe.

Our project is called "Our cultural diversity, our common strength". It mainly focuses on our different cultures and how these are important to ensure a better future of Europe. The project lays focus on working together as a team with the different origins rather than argue about them. Traditions, norms or cultures should not be something that separates us. Instead, they should help us for a peaceful living together as a team.

Swedish, Italian and Luxembourgish students took part in this project. We attend classes in these countries and live with a host to get an idea of different ways to live in other countries. All the students are between 16 and 19 years old. This newspaper gives a sneak peek into the Swedish exchange that took place in Skövde, Sweden, between the 1 May 2022 and 7 May 2022.



Giulia Finzi

## Icebreaking activities

Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> May

As Sweden was the 1st mobility of this Erasmus+ program, none of the participating students knew each other beforehand. Therefore, the Swedish partners organized some ice-breaking activities that would allow the Italian and Luxembourgish students to get familiar with Skövde and the pupils involved in the activities.

Upon the arrival of the Italians, flying in one day after the Luxembourgers, the activities started on the 1st afternoon of the trip. Everybody got handed a list of places to find in the city and could then explore Skövde in small groups. The Swedish students would guide the others and share interesting knowledge about their town.

At every spot from the list, there was a task to be completed and a photo to be taken as proof of fulfillment of the said task. For instance, there would be instructions for building a pyramid in front of the Santa Helena Kyrka or, later on, for singing in front of strangers.

During that, everybody had time to get to know each other and learn more about the participants of the program. First impressions were made, first friendships formed and a great start into our Erasmus+ project got guaranteed.



OUR CULTURAL DIVERSITY  
OUR COMMON STRENGTH

The logo of our project, finally designed by Bianca Iscru. The used colors are the colors found in the Italian, Swedish and Luxembourgish flag.

### Fun fact #1

The forest & lakes

Julie Hagman, Mathilde Hamacher

63% of the land area of Sweden is forest. The trees are mostly pine trees, and they cover most of Sweden. Sweden has more than 95.000 lakes where swimming is permitted.

**Crazy, is it not?**

### Fun fact #2

Alcohol laws

Lina Jakobsson

In Sweden you're not allowed to buy alcohol before the age of 20 and you can also only buy alcohol in one store called Systembolaget.

**Weird, right?**

### Fun fact #3

School and food

Tyra Jenemark

In Sweden, all students eat lunch in school for free. Usually there are different options to choose from.

**Isn't that cool?**

Emilia Abreu

## Workshops on culture

Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> May

Before the workshop started, we were shown a video about culture and the complexity of this word's definition. After that we were separated into mixed groups which always consisted of two Italian students, two Swedish students and two Luxembourgish students. In these groups, we then had the time to discuss and come up with our own definition of culture as well as cultural heritage. After that we could compare the little we knew about Sweden's culture with Luxembourg's and Italy's culture, and we started noticing some differences, which then helped us come up with a few examples of cultural diversity. After the discussion rounds, each group got to present their findings.

“My own + our common cultural heritage”

During this activity we were again shown a video, this time however, it was about cultural diversity. In the following minutes, we explored several possibilities of what cultural heritage could mean to individuals like us, groups, and society as a whole. We then compared how we perceived the other's cultures in talking about stereotypes. While everyone seemed to have a lot to say about Sweden and Italy, the only thing that could be found about Luxembourg was that all Luxembourgers are rich. In the last part of the workshop, every group created a tourist brochure on one of the participating countries.



Pupils from Sweden, Italy and Luxembourg working on the workshop together



This is one of the most common fikas in Sweden. The kanelbulle. In the background the city of Skövde can be seen.

Julie Hagman

## Swedish fika

The best snack!

“Fika” is a Swedish word that is difficult to translate into other languages. The closest translation into English is to “have coffee and a snack”.

Swedish fika is very loved and appreciated by Swedes. They can have multiple fikas a day, but it is most common one in the afternoon. Fika usually includes a snack such cookies, pastries, cakes, as well as a coffee, tea, or juice.

During the Swedish exchange the students were offered a small fika once or twice a day, which was very appreciated. Kanelbullar, chokladbollar, and dammsugar were the most common. If we were to guess, the kanelbullar were probable the favourite!

Amal Chtati

## Time capsule

Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> May

One of the workshops during our stay in Sweden was about making a time-capsule. A time capsule is a historic cache of goods or information, usually intended as a deliberate method of communication with future people, and to help future archaeologists, anthropologists, or historians.

In our case, we used this time capsule as an opportunity to assemble all of the memories we had of our week in Sweden. We were allowed to talk about our cultural heritage, learn about different historical events from Sweden or Luxembourg and get to know our interests and passions a lot better.



Students brainstorming on the subject of the time capsule; getting ideas etc.

Tyra Jenemark and Lina Jakobsson

## Karlsborg Fortress

Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> May



The Karlsborg Fortress

On a Wednesday in May, we went to Karlsborg to see the big fortress. The city of Karlsborg will be the new capital city in case of war. If that happens, the royal house, the government and more will move from Stockholm to Karlsborg.

In 1819 the Swedish king Karl XIV Johan decided to build the fortress. This was after the Russian occupation of Finland (Finland belonged to Sweden before this), when Sweden felt threatened by Russia. Therefore, the fortress is located in the middle of the country next to a lake.

The fortress was finished in 1909. The plan was to build the fortress in 10 years. This did obviously not work, instead it took them 90 years to build.

When we arrived at the fortress, we had a guided tour inside. We saw a movie about the history of the fortress in the beginning and then proceeded to move on into the fortress. The tour was very adventurous and used sound effects.

The fortress is one of Europe's largest and is made of limestone. We found it very beautiful, and it was interesting to see all the details such as the moats.

Tyra Jenemark and Lina Jakobsson

## The lake Vättern

Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> May

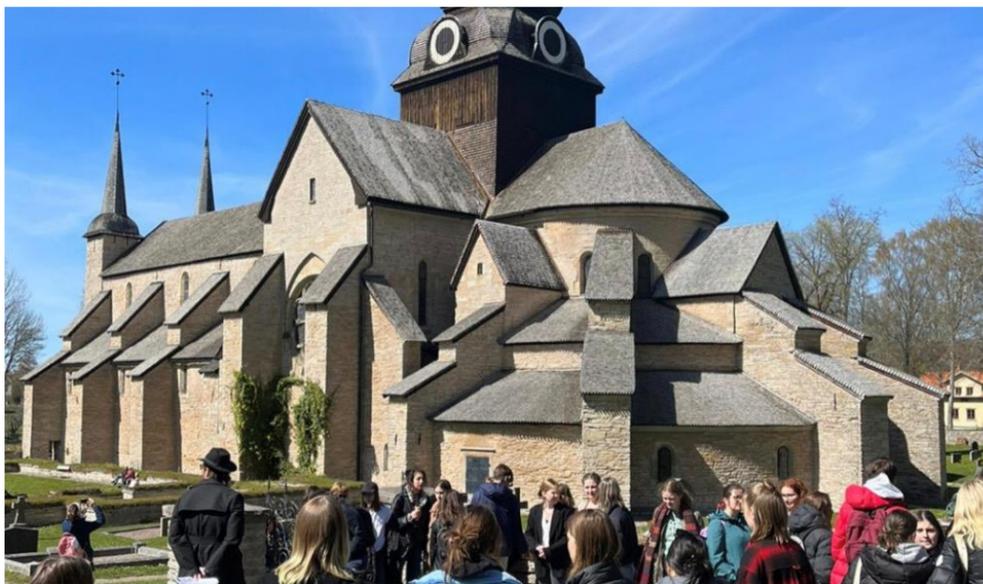
After the guided tour at the fortress, we went to the nearby lake Vättern. The lake is a long and narrow lake, which is Sweden's second and Europe's sixth biggest lake.

Vättern is known to be cold, but also a supply of drinking water. The lake is 1886 square kilometers big and because of that it's almost a coast climate around the lake.

Every year, there's a big event called - Vätternrundan. It is a bicycle race, in which around 1500 people participate. They bike around the whole lake (300 km), in just one day.



The Luxembourgish delegation with their teachers at Lake Vättern.



The Monastery church of Varnhem, Sweden.

Agnes Forkman & Victoria Bodén

## The monastery church of Varnhem

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May

The monastery church of Varnhem was built in the 1150s in a small village called Varnhem, close to the mountain Billingen in Sweden. In the area of the monastery church, the first signs of Christianity in Sweden were found. In the year of 1234 there was a fire that destroyed the church. Next to the monastery there are ruins of the old monastery that burned down. There is also a big herb garden where the monks used to plant herbs to use for medication. The extensive rebuilding of the church started shortly after the fire.

The extraordinary history of Varnhem was insightful and full of purpose. The trip there gave us a perspective and a new point of view of the development of the Swedish culture and history.

Thanks to the opportunity to be a part of the Erasmus + project, we have come to pay close attention to how the differences and similarities in our different cultures unite us.



All the students and teachers at the Museum of World Culture.

## Trip to Gothenburg

### Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> May



Luxembourgish and Swedish students in the Museum of World culture

All the students met at the Arena at 7.45 for the departure to Gothenburg. Sweden’s second largest city with over one million inhabitants. Upon arrival, we walked to the Museum of World Culture, where we were met by our guide.

Afterwards we walked together to the city centre, where we split up and spent two hours in the city. Some people went to the mall, other people grabbed coffee and some even got more Swedish fika. But we all met again to leave the city at 16.45. During the trip we educated each other on our different languages and cultural differences.

At the exhibition we were split into groups. At the exhibition “Crossroads”, which opened in 2016, we learnt about various global collections, unique places and important questions for all of mankind, for example the global goals. Through talking and discussing in our groups and later presenting the facts, we learnt about multiple cultures we'd never heard of or thought of before. We also learned how Sweden works with culture and how they preserve our global heritage.

Later, we went to the exhibition of “Dia de los Muertos”. There, we saw a part of Mexican culture and tradition, including their cultural history and heritage. There was an activity where you write the names of your dead relatives and hang them up, which we participated in. For lunch we had a Swedish buffe served by the restaurant “Table” inside the museum.

“The beauty of the world lies in the diversity of its people.”

- unknown

The Museum of World Culture was founded in 1999.

Gothenburg is Sweden’s second largest city and “Nordens” fifth largest city. It has around 1 070 000 inhabitants.

Gothenburg is a culturally diverse city with inhabitants of many different nationalities.