

Our second meeting in Vilafraca del Penedès

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Work** **TOGETHER**



Education and Culture
Lifelong learning programme
COMENIUS

Berlin - Vilafranca del Penedès - Stockholm

After a long time of waiting (more than five months after our first meeting) it was time to travel to Vilafranca del Penedès in Catalonia, Spain to continue our exchange program and our cooperation.



On Sunday, 23rd of October we (seven students and two teachers) went to Spain.

We had a good and save flight from Berlin to Barcelona. To go from the airport to Barcelona Sants (main station) and from there to Vilafranca was easy and took about two hours. We arrived at the hotel in the evening and were surprised about how nice the hotel was. Imagine, the wash basins were made of glass!

The group from Sweden had arrived earlier and welcomed us. So we used the first evening to talk a little bit with them and to get to know each other.

On **Monday**, 24th David, the Spanish teacher, picked us up from the hotel at shortly past nine. He took us to the school where all students and teachers of MAP class (MAP is the name for the PL-classes in Vilafranca) already waited for us. First we had a little breakfast together and all students introduced themselves. Here we already noticed that it could become a little bit difficult with communication



because not everybody was able to talk in English. But the teachers helped and translated when necessary. Afterwards we presented our hometowns. Therefore we had prepared a little PowerPoint presentation (you can find it in the Mirrorwebsite, too). It was a challenge for us because it was all in English and we were quite nervous to read it out in front of so many people. But we did well. After that we got into closer contact with our hosts. We had agreed before that we want to go and work together at practical placements. We wanted to learn about how work is organized in



Spain in order to compare it with our work in Germany. Via the "Forum" on our website we had exchanged information about the practical placements and decided who wants to go where. Now it was time to find the partner and to fix a time and place where to meet next morning. In fact that was easier than we thought because the Spanish students had prepared some material and knew what to say. So we all could go for lunch. Afterwards an exciting activity was on the agenda. The Spanish students had swimming classes in an indoor swimming pool and we had the chance to go with them. OK, not all of us were brave enough to put on a bathing cap and swimming suit. But those who went into the swimming pool were delighted. There



were not only different pools where we could swim. There were also a Jacuzzi and a sauna. We liked it a lot and it was good fun. Only the Spanish students had to follow their lesson.

After we had left the swimming pool we went back to the school – and got into heavy rain showers. Now all of us were wet again! But that

didn't stop us from having fun.

In the evening we all met in the town hall where we were welcomed by some authorities. It was interesting to see how highly regarded Productive Learning is in Vilafranca.



On **Tuesday** we had our first work experience together. We all met at the places we had agreed on and went off to work. It was for everybody an interesting experience. We noticed that work in Spain is in some cases similar to the one in Germany and sometimes it was totally different. Some of us had to do quite a lot and others could mainly watch. Here again it was a question of communication. At practical



placements were the student or the mentor spoke English it was much more interesting and fun than in those jobs where communication was only with hand and feet. But however it was we learned a lot. Sometimes we were interrupted by our teachers, who visited us to see if everything was OK and to take some pictures. At lunchtime Work was over and we met at the hotel to get some food. Afterwards we met in the school to talk about our experience and to evaluate our second day. That took quite a long time because we wanted to say a lot but often needed help from our teachers. Afterwards the Spanish students wanted to show us parts of their hometown. But we knew the places already. So we said good bye and went to our hotel where we had some free time before we went to dinner. Afterwards we had free time again and met with the Swedish student to go into town or just stay in the hotel and talk. That was really good. We got on very well with them!

Wednesday was a really great day. We all together went to Barcelona. It took us about one hour by train till we arrived in that beautiful town. We first went into the city center and walked around. We had a look at a very old church where they had some geese in the yard. We visited many squares, walked along the main street (rambla) and had some time to buy some souvenirs in the side streets. As the weather was warm and sunny we enjoyed it a lot to have some spare time. After we had met again we went to the sea where we had lunch and time to relax in the sun. Some of us stretched down on the benches, others walked around or did some shopping in the nearby mall. Of course we used the time to exchange ideas or just chatted with our friends from Spain and Sweden.



After a while we went on to Parc Güell which was created by Antonio Gaudi. It was a long and exhausting walk from the underground all the way up to the park. But it was worth it. We were all impressed



by the extraordinary architecture and landscape. And what a stunning view over Barcelona! We will never forget that. But unfortunately we had only little time left till we had to leave because we had to take the train back to Vilafranca. We were all sorry that we couldn't explore the park longer. On the other hand we were tired and needed the rest in the train.

After having arrived in Vilafranca we had something to eat and then another adventure was waiting for us. We went to a club of the famous Castellers and learned how the Catalans create these incredible human towers. We even had the chance to try it ourselves. OK, not all of us were courageous enough to climb on top of each other but some did and some helped to form the basis.



After all it was an exhausting but beautiful and very interesting day. None of us had difficulties to fall asleep.

On **Thursday** we continued our work experience. We knew where to meet and our tasks and so it wasn't difficult at all. Again it was more fun at places with good communication. But in any case it was interesting and helped us to see similarities and differences between our work at home and in Spain. And the Spanish students did their best to help us and to make us feel comfortable. In between our teachers

came, took some pictures and informed if everything was OK.



After work we all met again in school and talked about our day. Most of us liked it a lot. Only some of us were bored because they didn't have so much to do and had difficulties with communication.



After all the evaluation an interesting phase started. We interviewed each other and created an individual poster with all the information we got about every student.



Afterwards we put all the posters on a wall so that all of us could see them. It was amazing how creative everybody was and everyone liked the results. Johan from Sweden liked especially the cat that Arnau had created.

When we came back from dinner to the hotel we had enough time to talk to the Swedish students about their and our lives and had the chance to learn something about everyday life in Stockholm, about their culture, their music and free time activities. We were all sorry that the next day would be the last day together.

On **Friday** our program had to be changed. Originally we wanted to go out in the mountains and celebrate together with the whole school Mila I Fontanals the traditional fiesta "Castanyada" where all come together and eat chestnuts and other



Catalan sweets. But unfortunately the weather was so bad that we could not go outside. It rained all the time. But our Spanish hosts had prepared a "plan B". We went together to the vineyard "Torres" – one of the biggest and most popular vineyards in Catalonia. We got into a little train and had a guided tour through the enterprise and the cellars. Afterwards we saw a film about the family and the tradition of Torres. In the tasting room we could taste some wine – of course nonalcoholic (it was

good) and buy some souvenirs in the shop.

Back in school we had some chestnuts and started to write some texts together about our work experience. Always one Spanish and one guest student worked together at one computer. Of course our teachers helped us because it was sometimes difficult to find the right words in English. Our results can be found on the Mila I Fontanals part of the website.

After lunch we had some free time. We took the chance to do some shopping and to buy some souvenirs for our families.

At eight o'clock we met again for the farewell dinner. We had lots of tapas which were REALLY good. Then it was time to say good bye. We had some presents for our Spanish friends and they gave us some presents, too. We felt really sorry that the week was already over and that we had to leave. We really have found some friends in Vilafranca – from Spain and from Sweden.



Some of us stayed in the house where we had the dinner. In the courtyard there was a meeting of the famous Castellers. They were rehearsing for one of the next days when there was a competition between some different groups of Castellers. It was exciting to see how they manage to build these high human towers and how many people are involved.

In the hotel we didn't want to go to bed. We wanted to stay as long as possible together with our Swedish friends.

Saturday it was our departure. The Swedish had to leave very early in the morning to catch the flight from Barcelona. We couldn't even say "good bye". Our plane was in the evening. So we had enough time to have breakfast and to pack our suitcases. At about 10 o'clock we left Vilafranca because we wanted to spend the day in Barcelona. We took the train (as we had done on Wednesday). We were all quite tired and were lucky that the train was not crowded and everybody could sit. In Barcelona we put out luggage in lockers at the main station and went into town. We had a look again at the old town and were at one of Gaudi's houses. But the best was that we went to the beach. Although it was cold, we took off our shoes and went into the water. Well not really, only with our feet. And the water was COLD. But it was a good feeling. It is fantastic to have the sea next to the city center. We would like to have the same in Berlin. We only have the river Spree – and that is dirty.



At about 5 o'clock it was time to go back to the main station. We took our luggage and went to the airport. There we had some nice experience. First Marc noticed that he had lost his passport – and we did not have enough time to go to the police. But luckily the people were very friendly and as we traveled in a group and he had a copy

of his passport they let him pass. At boarding time Sydney couldn't find her boarding pass any more. Apparently she had lost it at the security check. We rushed through the airport – and the nice officers had found it and gave it to us.

Then nothing exciting happened any more – and we were glad about that. Our plane was in time and we arrived in Berlin shortly before midnight. Our parents and friends were already waiting at the airport and took us home. We were tired but full of impressions about that wonderful week.