



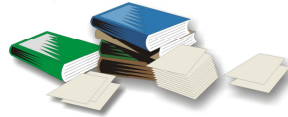
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CONTACT MEETING

GEOVANI PROMOSSI SENZA CONFINI

HEIST-OP-DEN-BERG, BELGIUM
SATURDAY 02.10.2010 - SATURDAY 09.10.2010

Here I am, back home: me, my paper, my pen, back to my ordinary city, my ordinary life.. or almost.. "Communication as a common good", a sentence that Bernadette repeated a million times,



this is how my amazing experience in Belgium started. During my week in Belgium we worked a lot on communication, even though I don't think that would help me express my feelings on my personal experience better.

Belgium is a fantastic country and I can't understand why people insist on Belgian stereotypes commenting: "People in northern Europe are cold, there's nothing special to see in Belgium, why are you going there?" As soon as we got to Brussels, we found the sweet Bernadette with our Belgian partners to welcome us at Zaventem airport.

After welcoming us just as if we were kings, we headed for the school where a journalist was waiting for us, taking pictures and informing us that photos and interviews could be found in his newspaper a couple of days later. I thought "Wow! where am I?".

After school, it was time to go home with my partner Renèe, the sweetest girl on earth!.

That same day I met Kim (a Belgian girl I met 2 years ago on holiday) and we all went bowling.

The next day, on Sunday, was a special day, as Renèe took me to a special youth club where they help very young kids, the club was called Chiro, and everybody found it very funny that I shared a name with their youth club! After we played a lot of games with them we decided to go. We went out together with Vera and Joke, Mrs. Pierina with her daughter Alexandra.

WE became friends right away and went to play mini golf: she was very very kind, and invited me for dinner, but, unfortunately, Alexandra wasn't at home that night but her mum cooked for me some delicious food as she had Promised anyway.

The following days we had a lot of activities at school - yes, we worked a lot - on communication and common goods, also visiting lots of beautiful places like Antwerp, Brussels and Leuven; we visited lots of art museums, and I must confess I enjoyed watching all the paintings I had never seen before.

One of the best things we enjoyed in Belgium was, of course: Everyday each one of us received at least 300g of chocolate and I 'm positive I put on some weight but, as the proverb says "when you're in Rome, do as the Romans, and we kept on eating chocolate for the rest of the week".

On the other hand, I also enjoyed all the sports activities Bernadette had arranged for us: the most exciting one was when we went to Ostende, a small city on the coast. We spent all day on the beach, playing games and water sports We put on our caps (we looked like a bunch of power rangers) and we started with the boating and diving into the freezing water.

Then we went surfing, my favourite.! There were a lot of waves and it was an amazing experience that I would do a million times, again.

We also went canoeing, took a shower, had hot chocolate and everyone went back to the train.

What a fantastic day that was! We also had lots of workshops at school and meetings with very interesting people, such as the Mayor of Heist, and the Minister of Education, the visit at the European Parliament where, with the help of Mrs. Serpe I asked a delicate question about immigration and Turkey. One of the things that made me really happy was that we were considered as a very reliable by our guide, the trainers and Bernadette.

Communication and information on our countries also meant that we showed our partners some typical dance from our region: we danced a tarantella both at school during a workshop and at the City Hall, when we met the Mayor of I was a bit embarrassed but it was worthy doing it, because everybody enjoyed watching it and we were asked by our Belgian, Spanish and Jordanian friends to teach them how to dance it during our farewell party.

I do hope that my writing on my exchange trip to Belgium was good enough to communicate my feelings and emotions on my experience: it gave me a unique occasion to meet new people from Europe and outside, and now I have lots of new friends I hope I will keep forever.

When we left, in between tears and hugs, I was aware I would never forget that amazing experience for the rest of my life!

Ciro