

Roberto Sonedda

## Impressions about the Comenius SPUREN project

I'm Roberto Sonedda, a student from Villasor, a little town in the South of Sardinia, Italy.

Some of my schoolmates and me have been chosen by our school, Liceo Alberti, to participate in the Comenius "SPUREN" project and in May 2014 we had the opportunity to be at the "European Week", which took place in Paderborn, Germany (where the coordinating school is).

We stayed there in a nuns' old convent and then, few days after our arrive, we did some activities, through which we could socialize with other students that came from different European states. At the beginning we felt pretty well there and we started communicating with some Lithuanian students through a funny table game, but later we also chatted with other participants coming from Finland, Hungary and Bulgaria. Since the first moments, therefore, we could learn lots of information and curiosities concerning other students, such as their hometowns, hobbies and schools.

The possibility of learning something new about their cultures, which are sometimes quite different from ours, and the fact that we really improved our English from the beginning of the activities, was amazing!

In the following days we attended many conferences, where we had the opportunity to increase our knowledge about European states, for example how differently they have developed since the 20<sup>th</sup> century to now, and also many interesting facts about these countries.

During the second part of the other students' performances we could watch many recordings about proverbs and idiomatic expressions from different countries, such as the Finnish, Belgian and Lithuanian ones, that were really interesting (and also really funny too!).

Finally, after dinner, our turn to perform came! We acted and sung in an adaptation of a famous Italian story, "The Adventures of Pinocchio", and then we sang a piece we composed by ourselves. That was a very

exciting experience; I'm sure I would repeat that again, both because we made the other participants enjoy it and because it was real fun!

On the day before we left, a real "treasure hunt" was organized all around the streets of Paderborn. For this activity we were divided into several little groups, with participants of different nationality. This treasure hunt was probably one of the best activities organized, as we had the chance to visit the town, see the landmarks of the place and interact with all the members of our group. Probably, the organizers of this activity (the teachers from the school in Germany which coordinates the project) wanted to suggest something. I think the idea was that it doesn't matter if we are all different or where we come from, what really counts is to collaborate to reach the same goal, a thing that many adult people haven't learnt yet.

I can say with certainty that this project was really enjoyable and amazing. It also gave us the opportunity to improve our knowledge about new cultures, new people and new thoughts; besides, during these days we had to use English to communicate, a thing that at the beginning seemed difficult, but finally we managed to speak pretty well with everyone.

Certainly, this was a huge new experience, which I'd like to repeat in the future, and I think that also my mates agree with this idea.



From left to right: Daniela, Alessandra, Ms Melis, Giulia, Ms Buzzanca, Ms Todde, Matteo, Andrea and... myself!

By the end of last March, finally, came our turn to host the other students coming from the participant countries. I was thrilled by the idea of hosting a student who could not speak Italian. I knew it was going to be an exciting adventure and an occasion I couldn't miss as well.

We were going to show off our culture and our habits. Of course, we showed what our country could offer too, such as its wonderful landscapes.

At the beginning of the experience, when my special guest from Hungary arrived, I was a bit scared by the fear of not being able to communicate with him, but we later found out that it wasn't so difficult. The following day we went on a sightseeing tour of our city, Cagliari, in which we showed our guests the best places around, as well as its many monuments. Then we came back to our school, where we gave an extract of one of our best epic poems, the Divine Comedy. Lately, the same day, we went to Molentargius, a park-like place, a nature sanctuary actually, where we

could have a wonderful sight of our well known salt flats, through which we reached the seaside. During the evening, instead, we had a pizza together (because, of course, we couldn't let our guest leave before having tasted one of our best- known dishes!).

The following day, we went to an excursion to the park La Giara. Here, even though the weather wasn't perfect, we managed to have an extraordinary time, enjoying the fresh air and the astonishing sight of the mountains. In the afternoon, we also visited a Sardinian typical monument we're really proud of, Su Nuraxi of Barumini, which is also a UNESCO cultural heritage site!. Then we came back to Cagliari, and we went shopping with our guests.

On the second-last day, we and our guests visited a museum in Cagliari, but the most exciting part of this day was still coming. Indeed, in the evening our guests showed us their performances; some of them showed us a kind of representation of several of their own proverbs or common sayings translated into English, while other students danced and sang traditional songs. We really enjoyed this moment, also because we found out that our and their traditions were pretty similar. Then we tasted and really appreciated many of our typical Sardinian dishes.

Unfortunately the last day had already come and, with it, the time for goodbyes.

In conclusion, I think that this whole experience has been such an amazing way for learning many important aspects of our neighbor countries, such as their traditions or many facts about their history. In exchange for this, we taught them many interesting things about our country and our wonderful island.

