

Reflections on the Impact of the Erasmus Exchange to Matera, Italy.

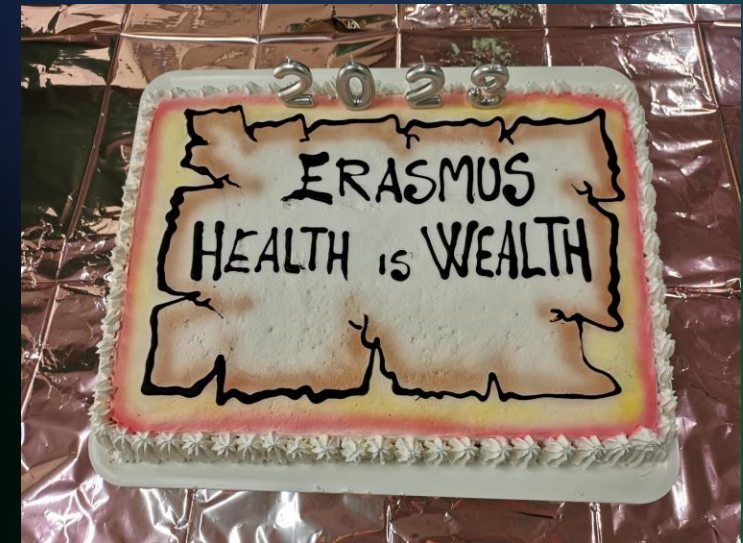
By Ada, Saaga, Jani, Matilda, Anni

"Health is wealth:
enriching EUr life"





5 Grade 9 students and 3 teachers from OIS participated in the Erasmus trip to Italy between May 14th – 20th, 2023. There were also students and teachers from our partner countries Scotland and Spain there at the same time.



What we did in Matera:

- Day 1: Getting familiar with the Italian school
- Day 2: A trip to Viggianello in the mountains to aquatrek in a stream
- Day 3: Orienteering in Matera city centre
- Day 4: A trip to Policoro Beach to do beach sports
- Day 5: Presentations by each country; Italian folk dancing



Reflection by Student 1

- I learned that the people in Matera take good care of their physical well-being. For example, by walking a lot as well as participating in many sports...
- ...my host told me that almost all the girls in her school play volleyball and it is a common sport





- The school system in Italy differs from Finland. Compared to Finland they have very different teaching techniques
- The learning environment and class atmosphere differs from Finland. For example, during the lessons the classes were never silent whereas, in our school, usually all the students are quiet and listen to the teacher.
- The school environment also differed quite a bit from our school, as the bathrooms in Matera didn't have mirrors, locks, or paper, which made us appreciate our school more.



Reflection by Student 2

- The most prominent thing I learned in Matera about health and well-being is that human connections are very important.
- Being around several people, whether that is your family, friends, or strangers, was very common in Italy. People were almost never alone, and everyone was extremely social.
- Being around others is important for your mental well-being, since you learn to respect others, as well as yourself.
- I often went out of my usual comfort zone and started talking more or even to complete strangers. The result was extremely rewarding, since I made many new friends and improved my already existing friendships.



- Mealtimes were very different from Finland, since they were held three times a day at 10.00, 14.00, and 20.00, while in Finland we usually have 7.00, 12.00, and 6.00, with snack breaks in between. People also took things very easy, and often spent more than 2 hours eating.
- Another related topic that impacted me was how late people stayed up. Every evening, we were in town or awake at home until 23.00-0.00. This came to me as a bit of a shock, since in Finland people go to bed far earlier and would not even have the energy to stay active that late. Even my host's six years old brother stayed up as long as we did.



Reflection by Student 3

- I realized that people in Matera walk a lot more and do more activities than in Finland. I was able to see this by the constant walking and moving around that we did during the days that we were in Matera.

- I think that the biggest impact for me was the food and the price of it. In Matera a pizza that is a "large size" in Finland only cost 5 euros, but in Finland it would maybe cost 15 euros.
- The food that we had at their school was so good, and that kind of surprised me.





Reflection by Student 4

- I noticed during our Erasmus trip to Matera that dinner times for the families and friends are their time to socialize.
- The people in Italy are close with their family and friends, and in their free time, they go to eat in restaurants.



- I was also impacted by this because in Finland when we eat dinner, it is a fast process with minimal talking. But in Italy, they socialized during this time, and they also took a longer time to eat and had four different courses of food.
- After this trip, I will try to use more time to eat because it is good for my social and physical health, because eating slower is better for your metabolism and during dinner time, I could socialize and talk about my day with friends and family.



Reflection by Student 5

- I learned about health and well-being in Matera. For example, the Italians were very social and enjoyed talking a lot with their friends which made them happy.
- We walked in the city and went to different cafes where everyone enjoyed having conversations with others. The Italians also didn't use their phones that much and rather spent their time with their friends and family.



- The lifestyle of the Italians was very healthy. For example, we didn't stay at the hosts' houses the whole evening after the school day, but instead went walking around the city and met other people.
- Also, we used the car less than in Finland. For example, when we went to eat to a restaurant which was a few kilometers away, we walked there.
- All in all, the Italians seemed very active and happy because they were walking a lot during the day instead of using the car and they socialised a lot.



- I also learned about school life in Italy. It was a lot different than in Finland, for example, teaching methods and rules. The students usually weren't quiet during the lessons or in the lunch hall which was very surprising.
- One good thing that I learned during the lessons was that in the beginning of every lesson the students had to put their phones to the back of the class into a box so that they wouldn't disturb the lesson.



Thank you for your attention!

To stay healthy this summer: Be active, eat nutritious foods, don't rush, and enjoy quality time with your family and friends!