

Students from Chania at the European Council in Strasbourg

25 students from high schools in Chania travelled to Strasbourg and participated in the "Euroscola" program organized by the European Council.

The purpose of the Euroscola program is the participation of students in project groups along with classmates from other countries - members of the EU, the exchange of thoughts and the formulation of ideas and suggestions for the future of the European Council and the EU.

The program included the participation of students in a convention organized in Strasbourg, at the seat of the European Council. The students participated in project groups, whose topics were prepared at their schools. The students agreed with their teachers to keep a diary during the 4-day visit in Strasbourg. Through the pages of their diary we can read their experiences:

Leaving Chania

"Our trip started on Thursday morning... we all gathered at the Chania Airport, 25 students and four accompanying teachers. We were all coming from different schools, the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th General High School and the Eleftherios Venizelos General High. We reached Athens Airport quite fast and we jumped on the plane to Stuttgart. Our flight would be approximately 2h so most of our team started preparing and learning several pieces of information on the EU.

The reason? But of course the Eurogame, a game we knew we would be playing the next day at the European Council. We knew that Eurogame would include 19 questions. The main difficulties were two: first of all, the questions would demand some knowledge on the EU and second, each one would be in different languages of the EU. So we all knew that we had to meet some new kids the next day, but that was not an issue..."

Reaching Stuttgart

"In our first scouting walk in Stuttgart, we managed to make our presence noticeable, as the Greek temper always stands out. However, soon our voices were replaced by sounds of enthusiasm for the lovely images



we saw.

In Stuttgart everything was different: imposing buildings, green, large clean streets. We ate traditional sausages and Schnitzels, wonderful sweets and we visited some sites, such as the Protestant Church, and the Museum of Modern Art with the glass walls. The high buildings the continuous arrays of trees and

historical center of the city. We found Petite France, a small quarter with lovely houses, whose façades were ornamented with wood.

Each house had its own color and all were adorned with flowers beneath the windows. We all took many pictures, because we have never seen such beauty in

to the European Council. At 8am we had already finished breakfast. With the files in our hands we left for the E.C. We saw the huge round building of the EC made of glass symbolizing transparency, and metal denoting the solid foundations of the EU. At the Eurogame the teams had to answer to 19 questions asked in 19 different languages. This process demanded the collaboration of teams and team members.

The Greek team was very successful at the Eurogame as within the winning teams there was a



the bizarre but unique fountains left us speechless."

A walk in Strasbourg

"After almost two hours we reached Alsace, whose capital is Strasbourg. Indeed, it was a unique experience for me because it was my first time abroad. Reaching Strasbourg and crossing the borders from Germany to France, we all figured out that there are no borders. I remember clearly the tour guide saying "We are at the German part of Rheine" and then a few minutes later "We are at the French part of Rheine River". We just reached France and Strasbourg.

Around 8.30pm we got to the hotel in Strasbourg. We left our stuff and set on exploring the

Greece.

Later, although we had seen the Notre Dame de Strasbourg since it is visible from every corner of the city - the tower is 146m tall - we were astonished when standing in front of it. It is an imposing Church with impeccable and awesome architecture.

We were impressed by the bicycle routes, the small stores and the Cathedral. We took pictures, wandered around for a while, we tasted some local specialties, drank Blauche Beer and returned to the hotel. We were all exhausted that night. We fell asleep like dead - anyway we had an amazing day ahead of us."

Visit at the European Council - Eurogame

"We woke up at 6.30am, to go

sions of globalization".

The conversation was unique and exciting... we heard some radical and rational opinions... at the end we chose the suggestions we thought that could be realized and implemented.

Whoever belonged to the team "2009, European Year of Creativity and Innovation" we gathered in a room where we had our chairman and secretary elected.

After a two hour discussions we reached the conclusion that in order to boost and unite the creative powers of young people in the EU we have to organize more meetings and sessions like the one of Euroscola program, and maybe establish a Council of Youth in Europe, whose decisions would be seriously taken under consideration.

We also agreed that we have to optimize the level of education in all schools of the EU, so that the creative powers and innovative ideas will be favored.

The meeting ended with the European Hymn (Ode To Joy) along with the presentation of the flags of all countries members of the EU."

An unforgettable experience for the teens from Chania

"This experience was great, because regardless of the topics discussed, we had the chance to collaborate with so many people and see how they think and behave.

Visiting a country as a tourist, taking pictures of sites is completely different than talking to people, and forgetting for a while the usual "label" foreigners.

During the day we heard so many foreign languages spoken, that when we left, all these sounded actually so natural, as if it was my native language.

It was also very important that we saw up close so many processes ran by important people who actually influence our life to its finest detail.

The European Council is not something remote and indifferent, but a fascinating personal experience. Finally, our all day discussion in a foreign language was a nice practice of a language we have been learning for years.

These four days will stay carved in our hearts, as the nicest experience. Till the next one..."



Greek girl and one of our teachers. The game ended, and we split in new teams based on the topic we had chosen and studied from before.

This time, along with an official of the EC, we went to a session room. With democratic procedures, we chose the chairman of the meeting session and the secretary.

The topic elaborated was the "Social policy and politics for employment. How to deal with the political and social repercus-