

## **Report on Bilateral Exchange between Sciacca - Leeuwarden**

### **10/03/2018 -15/03/2018**

#### Monday 10th

After a very long and tiring journey, we finally arrived at Leeuwarden Central Station where we met our hosting families, who took us to their homes. We were all very excited to be in the Netherlands.

#### Tuesday 11th

The second day in Leeuwarden we went to school by bike, something unusual for us, and visited the Montessori high school. We had fun at the school gym, playing games to get to know each other. Then we listened to the presentations about the Netherlands, prepared by the Dutch students. They introduced their cultural peculiarities, main monuments, traditions, sports and economy. At 12 o'clock we had lunch at school. In the second part of the day, we had a work session and then a guided walking tour through Leeuwarden. We visited Oldehove, a leaning medieval tower, which reminded us of the tower of Pisa in Italy. Then we went to Kleine Kerkstraat which is the shopping road in Leeuwarden.

#### Wednesday 12th

The third day we took the train to Amsterdam. Johannes van der Meer guided us towards the Hidden churches in Amsterdam. Johannes van der Meer, is a minister of the protestant church in Leeuwarden. He knew everything about the Hidden Churches, which are now real museums. We walked through the Red light district and arrived at the hidden Catholic churches of "Amstelkring Museum" and "Ons Lieve Heer op Solder". Then we visited the famous Van Gogh Museum, the wonderful Plats Dam, it was great. There was a nice Christmas atmosphere, the weather was very

cold, but also very enjoyable. We also had free time and a lot of fun shopping at the Hard Rock Café. We turned back to Leeuwarden by train.

### Thursday 13th

The fourth day was the most important day of the week project because we faced the question concerning the LGBTs (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender). We met the COC Netherlands that strives for the discrimination of sexual orientation, gender identity, equal rights, emancipation and social acceptance of LGBT's in the Netherlands. The workshop was very interesting because we had the opportunity to learn how painful it could be when someone discriminates you. COC is one of the few LGBT organizations that has a special consultative status with the United Nations. Then we had lunch at school and after lunch we went ice skating at FEC, where we had lots of fun since it was our first time ice skating. At the beginning we weren't very good, but after a few funny falling downs, we skated pretty well. We had dinner all together at a restaurant and we ate so much.

### Friday 14th

The fifth day we had a work session at school. In small groups we analysed the survey results that we had done before at our hometown. We focussed on cultural similarities and differences between our country and Leeuwarden. Then we visited the Frisian Museum, in particular the Rembrandt exhibitions. During the tour, the guide proposed to draw on a paper a Rembrandt's painting. Back to school, after lunch, we created a drawing on a ceramic tile.

### Saturday 15th

The last day, we left very early, at 6.00 am, all our hosting families took us to the Central Station of Leeuwarden, it was a sad moment and we were all very moved when it was time to say goodbye. We took the train to Schiphol airport, from where we flew to Milan first and then to Palermo.

It was the best experience of our life and I hope we'll have other Erasmus+ projects. This Erasmus+ experience was something really special for all of us: listening and communicating in a language other than our mother language, visiting geographical locations, exploring historical environments, getting in touch with the habits and customs of a population, breathing the smells, listening to their sounds and noises, immersing ourselves in the rhythms of everyday life by participating and observing a different way of life. We think that the cultural comparison and the lived experience are indelibly fixed in the mind, they contributed to enrich our personal culture, make us citizens aware and open to the respect of every different cultural expression.