Ulla Taponen Report

Youth instructor

Involvement and affection, cultural youth work 20.12.2017

Leisure time services

Erasmus+- Youth in Action- Screenagers

Five youngsters from the Youth council of Nokia participated on the Erasmus+ Youth in Action youth exchange in Spileo, Greece 10.10.-20.10.2017. One place was offered to anybody and we got a former member of our Youth council to complete our group. In addition to the project participated groups from Hungary, Spain, Italy, Belgium, Estonia and Greece. There were 50 youngsters between 15-22 years together. Every group had their own group leader.

It was a real challenge to get there in Spileo. There weren’t any straight flights from Finland to the nearest airport which was Thessaloniki, but all in all we managed. It took 18 hours to go there via Istanbul, but it was nothing compared to our journey back to Finland. Our trip via Athens and Stockholm took nearly 40 hours, but after this project we thought it was worth it.

Hellas for Us was the leading association on this project by organizing everything from our accommodation in beautiful mountain area to the schedule and its content. We were dealing with social media on the project and we learned from different views how to use it, recognize the dangers and stop internet bullying. Youngsters thought also about their own behavior in the social media and addiction about different applications and mobile phones. We also had one day without mobile phones as an experiment about the addictions.

Every evening we’ve got a cultural night from the countries participating the project where we learned something new about each country culture, traditions and food. We showed to the others small video clips from Finland and the national epic of Finland, ”Kalevala”. We also celebrated Finland’s 100th anniversary as an independent country and we heard Finnish chocolate is the best chocolate in the world, as we already knew.

We visited a market place in Grevena and went to monastery museums in Meteora, where the view was breath-taking. We visited also a museum about mastodons and we saw the world’s longest tooth of a mastodon.

During the two weeks, youngsters get to known each other and made lifetime friendships. Even the shyest ones had enough courage to speak English and the prejudices crushed down, if they have been existing.

The whole group have been very active after the project and they’ve kept in contact in Facebook. The Italians have invited everyone to visit their place and many is going there, even from Finland.

Things that youngsters have said:

”Yeah, it was an pretty good experience and I would definitely go there again. I’ve got lots of friends around Europe, that’s amazing! The program was fascinating and it was really good for my English skills.”

”The program was good. I’ll always remember the views and the monasterys in Greece. I think maybe we learned something about the internet security.”

