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Erasmus+ KA2 „Unique National and European Symbols of our Culture and Originality” (U.N.E.S.C.O.)

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**KA2 - Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices
KA229 School Exchange Partnerships**

PROJECT JOURNAL – SUCEAVA, ROMANIA May 1st – 6th 2022

“Dimitrie Cantemir” Economic College Suceava coordinates, between September 2020 - August 2023, the Erasmus + KA229 project entitled „**Unique National and European Symbols of our Culture and Originality**” (U.N.E.S.C.O.). The partner schools come from European countries with a rich UNESCO heritage: Turističko Ugostiteljska Skola (Tourism and catering school), Split, Croatia, Istituto d'Istruzione Superiore Francesco Ferrara Mazara del Vallo, Italy, 1o Geniko Lykeio Artemidos Artemis, Greece, Cemberlitas Anadolu Lisesi Istanbul, Turkey, Instituto de Enseñanza Secundaria LosCardones Granadilla de Abona, Spain.

Between May 1st – 6th 2022, teachers and students from the six partner schools participated in the third mobility of the project, in Suceava, Romania, a meeting organized by the Economic College "Dimitrie Cantemir". The central theme of the activities was ***“The Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage”***, and aimed at deepening the information related to the intangible cultural heritage (living heritage) which is an important factor in maintaining cultural diversity, focusing on the traditions that each people preserves.

We chose this topic for the learning activity in Romania to make a plea for the intangible heritage, to promote the Romanian traditions and customs, starting from the premise that education plays an essential role in protecting the intangible cultural heritage.

Intangible heritage means more than the UNESCO list of special practices and expressions, it is living heritage, which evolves over time and gives each of us a sense of identity and continuity: it includes the way we speak, create, and our knowledge about the universe and nature - the latter being of particular importance in the age of climate disasters.

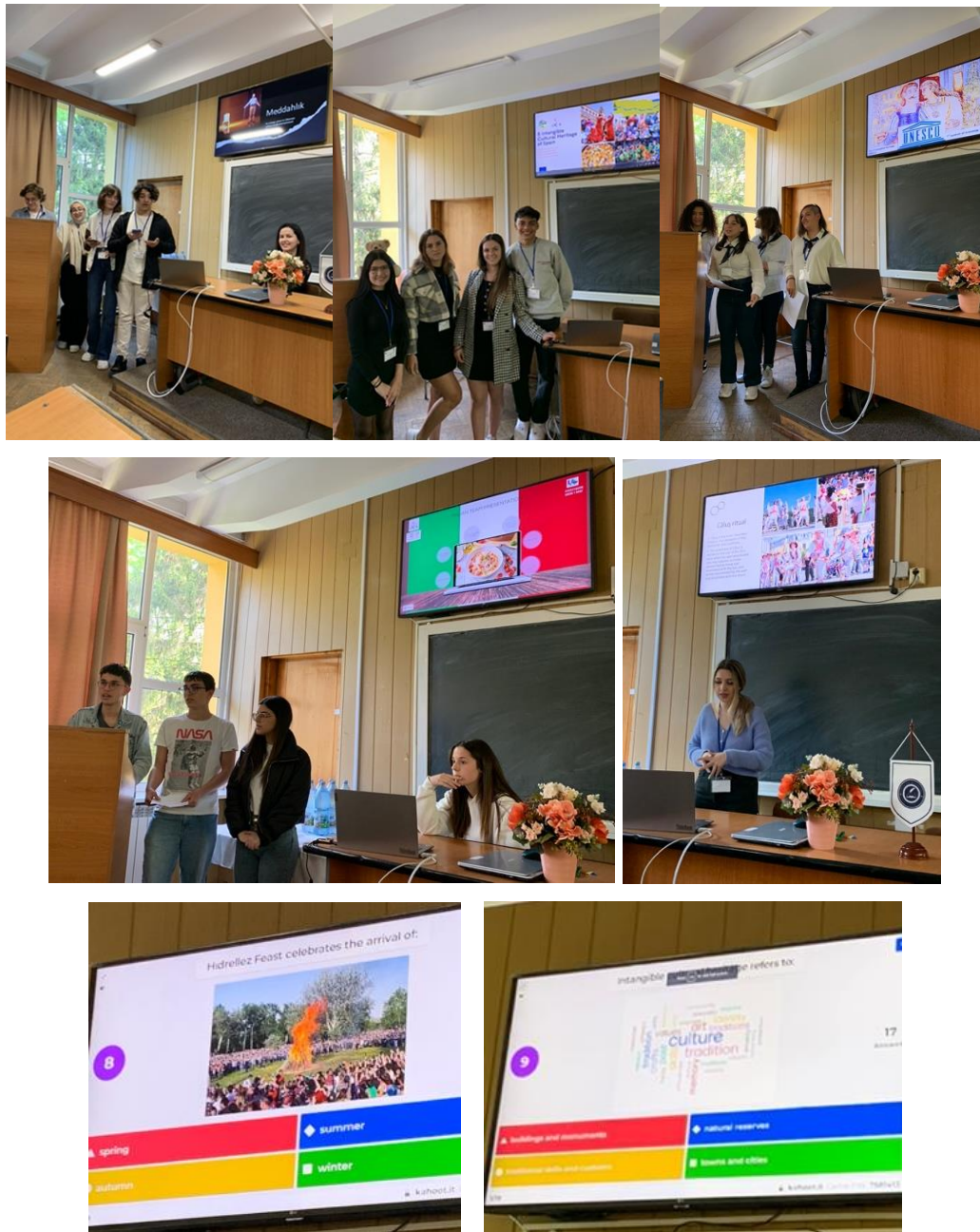


Intangible heritage includes traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts.

The importance of intangible cultural heritage is not the cultural manifestation itself but rather the wealth of knowledge and skills that is transmitted through it from one generation to the next. While fragile, intangible cultural heritage is an important factor in maintaining cultural diversity in the face of growing globalization. An understanding of the intangible cultural heritage of different communities helps with intercultural dialogue, and encourages mutual respect for other ways of life.



On May 2nd the official opening of the project meeting took place, and students and teachers presented and illustrated some representative elements of intangible heritage from each country: oral traditions and expressions; performing arts; social practices, rituals and festive events; knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; traditional craftsmanship. After the presentations, the students played a Kahoot game with questions about these intangible elements previously presented.



Next, students and teachers participated in an educational workshop "What are the UNESCO intangible Cultural heritage elements from Romania?", where they got in touch with the cultural practices associated with March 1st, the Calus ritual dance, the Doina, the craftsmanship of Horezu ceramics, lad's dances, the traditional wall-carpet craftsmanship, and the men's group Colindat, Christmas-time ritual, elements inscribed in the list of the intangible UNESCO heritage from Romania. On Monday afternoon, students and teachers experienced Romanian folk dances, under the coordination of a dance instructor and the school's folk ensemble.



On Tuesday, May 3rd, students and teachers made an educational visit to Codrii Seculari Slătioara, accompanied by representatives of the Suceava Forestry Department, who made various demonstrations on how to determine the age of a tree by taking samples.



The reserve, located on the eastern slope of the Rarău Massif on an area of 1064 ha, shelters an ancient forest, untouched by civilization, which is why it was included on the UNESCO World

Heritage list in 2017. The trees that make up this reserve are among the oldest in Romania and even in Europe, some specimens reaching the age of 350-400 years. Five new butterfly species have been discovered here, as well as a species of beetle, unique in the world.

Another educational visit was to the Voroneț monastery, inscribed on the UNESCO cultural heritage list in 1993, famous for unique shade of blue known as "Voroneț blue", whose color mix remains a mystery to the modern world.

At a time when Western European Christians were erecting cathedrals that overtook in size and beauty everything that had been built until then, the Bukovina region followed a different direction. The painted monasteries of Romania impress with their perfect blend of nature, man, and artistic creativity. The Voronet Monastery charms the visitors with its 500-year history, its legends, and especially with its artistic value.

Built in 1488, the construction of Voronet Monastery was finished in record time – three months, three weeks and three days – today being part of the UNESCO heritage as one of the Painted Churches of Moldavia. The exterior murals have preserved their hues despite centuries of inclement weather, but the ingredients used in preparing the paints are still a mystery.

The scenes in the murals depict, like a movie, the history of Christianity, presented in an original manner, very much influenced by folk beliefs, by the Eastern culture, but also by the Orthodox thought. The painting of The Last Judgement, depicted on the southern wall, gave the monastery the name of "The Sistine Chapel of the East", following Michelangelo's masterpiece in the Vatican.



The students made vlogs, Instastories at the UNESCO monuments and posted them on #erasmusplusunesco and participated in a series of team games under the coordination of the physical education teacher at the Casa Doamnei guesthouse in Voroneț.



On Wednesday, May 4th, students and teachers went on a guided tour (educational visit) in the historic area of Suceava: the Citadel of Suceava, Bucovina Village Museum and the monastery "Saint John the New" Suceava, registered in list of UNESCO monuments. The students experienced elements of cultural heritage and captured evidence (images, personal notes).

Suceava Fortress, built at the end of the 14th century near the medieval city of Suceava, was the main residence of the Moldavian rulers for almost 200 years, today a national historical monument.



Bucovina Village Museum is an open-air museum in the city of Suceava, which highlights the popular cultural-architectural heritage of Bucovina. The interest which this type of museum reveals, bases on several defining elements: the exhibition in a natural environment, different construction techniques and specific decorative elements with symbol value, the recreation of a traditional way of life, the document value with educational purpose, the exhibition of the ethnographical collections as close as possible to the utility of the object within the background and not only as museum object, allow the visitor to understand and value, Bucovina's traditions.



On Thursday, May 5th, the students worked in multinational teams participating in a webquest entitled “UNESCO and Intangible Cultural Heritage”. In order to provide a new way of transmitting related skills and to increase the visibility of practices among the younger generations, teachers also involved students in a series of workshops: “Traditional Intelligence and Strategy Games as Cultural Heritage” and cooking sessions, in order to offer a new way of transmission of related skills and to increase the visibility of practices among younger generations. The students played Mangala and learned how to cook dishes specific to the Mediterranean diet.



Traditional intelligence and strategy game Mangala is a traditional game which can be played on special boards or improvised ones such as pits on the ground. The game improves players’ cognitive, motor and social skills and strategic and creative thinking, and teaches them to be patient and considerate. It is transmitted both informally and through formal education. Mangala was inscribed in 2020 on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.



The Mediterranean Diet, recognized as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 2013, is supported and promoted by a task force comprised of the seven emblematic communities: Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Morocco, Portugal, and Spain.

The Mediterranean Diet, a nutritional model consisting primarily of olive oil, cereals, fresh and dried fruit, vegetables, a moderate quantity of fish, meat and dairy produce, a variety of condiments and spices, all washed down with wine or teas, has remained constant in time and space. It is a social practice based on the set of skills, knowledge, practices and traditions ranging from the landscape to the cuisine, which in the countries of the Mediterranean culture concern the crops, harvesting, fishing, conservation, processing, preparation and, particularly, consumption.





The students designed questions for the online application that will be completed by the last meeting of the project and produced the third section of the game (intangible heritage).

The students experienced, under the guidance of an authorized instructor, the Capoeira dance, which was inscribed in 2014 on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Capoeira is an Afro-Brazilian cultural practice - both wrestling and dancing - that can be interpreted as a tradition, a sport and even an art form. Capoeira players form a circle in the center of which two players engage with each other. The movements require great bodily dexterity. The other players around the circle sing, sing, clap and play percussion instruments.





The teachers discussed the organization of the next meetings, financial details, necessary documents, etc. The project coordinator gave a presentation of the activities carried out so far, the responsibilities of each school involved, emphasizing the program of activities for each mobility and the online application.

The evening ended with the awarding of certificates of participation in a festive atmosphere, where students and teachers exchanged impressions and tasted traditional dishes and desserts of Romanian cuisine.



The meeting was a real opportunity for professional, cultural training, exchange of experience and practice of language and computer skills for the participating students and teachers. Due to the activities of the project, the students had the opportunity to learn more about their own country and the culture of other countries, about the different lifestyles in both formal and non-formal learning environments, being active protagonists of the teaching and learning process.



Outdoor education - educational visits (students took part in a variety of adventurous challenges to discover Unesco heritage in Romania), curiosity and fun during activities (posting InstaStories, photos on social media) increased the quality and quantity of the learning process. By participating in all activities and coming into contact with different cultures, students have become receptive to the European heritage, have become more sensitive to the meaning of European culture, culturally aware and willing to consciously protect European heritage.

The activities carried out in the school workshops and the open discussions offered the students the opportunity to manifest their artistic and creative potential, to participate in experiences that helped them to learn not only scientific information, but also values, traditions.

Participating in webquests, using Microsoft and Web 2.0 tools and Google Play in an intercultural way stimulated students' academic success, improved their English language skills and specific vocabulary related to natural and cultural heritage.

Project coordinator,
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