

GEOCACHING in and out the classroom - MINDS ON THE MOVE

Project Code:

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Action: **Strategic Partnerships** for **Schools Only**

Call: **2016**

C1 - Loja, Spain - 23rd - 28th April 2017

The main goal of this mobility was to experiment the techniques learnt in France on how to create a trail with several real caches and how to create a multi cache, using tools like Geochecks and Certitude (the tools on Geocaching). As it proved trickier to create a trail, compared to what participants had thought, Spain decided to focus on tourism and history, and Spanish pupils found the idea of a mystery recipe to be found by geocachers interesting so they decided to create a cache in a village near Loja with steps to discover the recipe of the Spanish Croquettas.

Trails based on Tourism : a water trail in Loja, a viewpoint trail for tourists, and a virtual cache trail in Grenada. The students evaluated the trails.

The mobility was a success and students enjoyed visits with the Geocaching tool and learning in a fun and active way.

Several obstacles were met by participants: the delay in publishing the trails in Loja, which was not published by the time participants had to test them. This problem was solved by giving trails on paper with the coordinates to enter into the gps instead of using the app.

Secondly, while looking for the caches, participants didn't go unnoticed in the small town of Loja. As a result « muggles » (people who do not know what Geocaching is) removed all the caches of the water trail. This raised the issue of discretion while Geocaching.

In Grenada we used virtual caches to focus on the Historical Heritage (no need for boxes when you have monuments to look at), this way the exploration of the city was carried out without running the risk of not finding caches.

Experimental Labs in Nature: students organised a science fair based on experiments you can find in Nature (see pictures on the Spanish website).

During the week we held discussion sessions in international teams (teachers and students) collecting ideas and finding the way to integrate Geocaching methods into the school curriculums or cross-disciplinary methodology.

A Photo Contest was also launched: “Maths and Physics patterns in nature” : to trigger students' imagination and encourage cross-curricular activities. The winner was a Lithuanian student.

The Italian partner provided the group with Some Guidelines for a couchsurfing , and the « Cache of Memory » contest was organised on the Twinspace (9 contests instead of only one to enable more students to participate). France volunteered for organising it and deciding on the winners, and Greece was appointed to set it up on the Twinspace.

participants made some video shooting of main activities for final project video.

After the Mobility Websites were up-dated in each country.

C2 - Novara, Italy – 8th 14th October 2017

The second Blended Meeting took place parallel to the fourth Transnational Project Mobility (M4, see previous item).

The main focus of the trails presented by the Italian team was on Art: they were designed to make art accessible to everyone with an interactive tour available both on Geocaching.com and on the website of the team. That way, even beginners in Geocaching had no technical difficulties (provided their phones came with the internet).

This time, to prevent problems with the platform, questionnaires and guidelines were also given to participants in the paper form.

Each trail was devised in the form of a multicache (with multiple steps) combining a read/listen-to-learn part and some quizzes. In order to move on to the next step/cache it was essential to find the correct solutions to the quizzes.

The first trail was called “Walk and Discover Mysteries and Legends”, and it was a tour combining Urban Hiking with an introduction to Myths and Legends . The trail was designed together with the City Tourist Board and was then repeated on a national scale on October 31st .

This trail connected history and tourism in a fun and active way. Though very long, it was very informative and through anecdotes taught the geocacher about the many layers of history of the city of Novara.

The Antonelli trail or neoclassical trail (“Neoclassicism in Novara – A New Wind Blowing”) was aimed at teaching the classic Greek architectural elements to students, through observation of different buildings and matching activities created by the teachers, teaching the function of architectural elements, to give an idea of the difficulties encountered by architects in the previous centuries (physical but also financial), neoclassical elements of architecture, and symbols in neoclassical frescoes.

Another cache was planted near a Roman church with a questionnaire that helped pupils establish the internal organisation of a church and the functions of the different places, with special reference to the Romanesque art style (“All Saints’ Church - Understanding Romanesque style in Northern Italy”).

Students were split up in international teams to test and validate the trails in a spirit of competition and cooperation, which proved very successful.

The Italian partner shared expertise in the use of LearningApps.org, an app to create quizzes and interactive tests.

During the Mobility to Italy the winners of the Cache of Memory contests were discussed and decided, awards were given away under the form of vouchers (sent later on through the Internet by the French partner). The contest was held in the Twinspace.

All participants were given evaluation questionnaires in order to validate the trails, examine the inconvenience and the advantages, collect suggestions, especially considering the fact we tried to expand the use our website to compensate Geocaching.com platform limits.

The Couchsurfing idea still needs to be boosted; so far students have not travelled enough. We hope that with the passing of the months they will be more motivated and understand the opportunity.

C3 – Thessaloniki, Greece –4th – 10th February 2018

In Greece, as planned in the project agenda, we worked at Trails based on Science and Health, Unesco Trails (history), and Interactive-Experiential Sightseeing, as well as languages. The Greek team integrated the Geocaching.com caches with interactive lessons and quizzes (using the LearnigApps tool introduced in Italy). Participants learnt about the importance and use of the Defribillator and the importance of Physical activity for a healthy heart. Plus they understood the connection between a healthy life and a green environment. They also learnt a lot about ancient Greek and Unesco sites. An additional interesting trail was based on the way our Languages use many words that come straight from Greek. The importance of these trails is that most of them can be easily re-usable and adaptable to other contest. The task for the visiting team will be to exploit them and create similar outdoor lessons in their cities.

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These are the trails tested: Health Living - Sustainable Living (quiz embedded) ;The Unesco Trail - quiz "Spread the Word"; The Dot-to-Dot Interactive Trail ;The Waterfront Trail ;West Side Stories Trail. The feedback by all participants are positive.

While in Greece the French partner showed us a very interesting trail based on Maths, shared on the google drive to be reproduced in other countries.

During the welcome meeting at school the Greek students showed Powerpoint presentations about stereotypes related to each partner's country , which proved very interesting to be used for a language/culture lesson.

All partners agreed on the importance to develop their part of the website but we should all have a clear link starting from and going back to <https://Geocachingerasmus.weebly.com/Twinspace>. The Greek partner recommended to keep on using the Twinspace to share and cooperate with the students on the platform. The Twinspace will be kept open throughout the whole life of the project.

Common Management Expenses. The idea of the hosting partner paying for the majority of the Geocaching activities done during the Mobility allows partners to save more money for travelling. France and Lithuania will consider what may be useful for the partnership and contribute this way. Some ideas: trackables, posters, gadgets, professional video (to be produced in Poland)

Budget for Students' Mobilities. Partners confirmed the common decision to use the budget to allow all students that are part of the national teams to travel once. The budget for the Mobilities will be managed as a whole to buy a bigger number of flight tickets, and not distributed among a limited number of students.

From this stage on we should pay more attention to Inclusive types of trails/experiences.

With respect to this partners are already addressing different types of players. Students are going Geocaching with parents and families; also teachers+students+families (see Portugal and Spain), we are building connections with our towns local authorities, in Italy we are connecting to the University of Medicine and trying to promote Geocaching as a way to encourage movement for "Healthy Aging".

In Portugal they are working at a special App that can match our work.

Mobility to Poland. The dates for the Mobility to Kielce have been set: from Sunday 23rd to Saturday 29th September 2018.

The dates have been chosen since 26th September will be the "Day of Languages" and we can participates to big events in town.

This way, the final TPM Meeting (M6) in Italy will be postponed to November 2018.

C4 - Sintra, Portugal – 15th – 21st April 2018

Meeting with the local tourism authorities with minister of education + official from the city hall, speech – interview / press release.

Lecture about the importance of Physical preparation and the benefits of Physical activity.

Sport trail/competition – using the map of the school + position of ceramic tiles with numbers to report on the paper → association of sport and orienteering.

Trail tested: orienteering+ sport + history + tourism and multi-subject caches (Activities in local nature and monuments).

- Monuments and geocaching

1) National Palace → Fairy tale trail "Once upon a time" (Era uma vez): existing trail, chosen in order to understand how the system worked.

2) Pena Palace → Fairy Tail - same principle as the National Palace trail

Subjects involved : history, arts, sports → questions about the architectural and artistic specificities of the rooms + historical questions.

Fairy tale → attractive way to tackle historical subjects (mixing myths and reality). The numbers associated to some of the letters in the answers enabled us to decipher the coordinates of the final cache which was hidden in the park. There in the box we could find another code with letters from the fairy tale to find out what sport activity we would practice next : we used orienteering again (coordinates of the departure point included) ; Then we had a “rappel” (=climbing) activity. So we went down part of the mountain which we had climbed in the beginning of the afternoon by rappel. This was very motivating for the pupils because for once they felt that this sport was the reward for finding the cache, so surprisingly, even the less athletic pupils were very willing to do it.

3) Quinta da Regaleira + Parque da Liberdade (Freedom park). These caches made pupils use an app on their mobile phones so that they had to choose a trail with different points of interest that they needed to spot thanks to a simple map. Another cache that was not created by the school was proposed to us in Quinta da Regaleira: the orientation this time relied on turning right/left/counting our steps etc. In the Parque da Liberdade, the school had created a trail and split the pupils into international teams with caches to find in a different order, leading to a final cache that was locked by a code that they had to find thanks to the clue given in each cache
to be improved: initial instruction that did not mention the necessity to note down the numbers indicated down the page of the description.

-A multi-subject cache was also prepared by the school : the final coordinates led to a place near the school. The advantage of a multi disciplinary cache is that each pupil in the team has its own specialty and therefore can feel useful for team work. The subjects involved were Chemistry and Physics, Biology, History, Portuguese, Geography, Arts, PE and Maths.

- Cache about Erasmus+, to promote the success of our project, created with specific questions about Erasmus+ and our project (mystery cache).

- Cache to promote the natural history museum (tourism)

- Earthcache (Magoito) hadn't been published by the time we got there, since there was a mystery cache not far away that they had to solve in order to know the 160m perimeter in which it is impossible to publish the cache.

The discussion about the Big Contest & Fair to be held in Poland was postponed to the months following the mobility, through social media.

Some work was made on e-twinning to better use the pages and creation of a new twinspace to promote a future project about energies. Pupils got together in international teams to work on an artistic comic strip about Erasmus and the various subjects they worked on + places they visited. (work supervised by the Greek partners) – see final results:

<https://erasmusgeocaching.weebly.com/comics.html>

C5 - Kielce, Poland 23rd -29th September 2018

The meeting was supposed to be held in May but it was decided that it would be more practical to hold dissemination activities in September due to exams in June, which would have prevented many of the students to get involved in the dissemination activities, and because any event in May/June would have soon been forgotten and have a scarce impact on the new school year.

The meeting in Poland was a BLENDED TRANSNATIONAL MEETING (C5+M5) involving both participants and coordinators; it was hosted by Zespol Szkol Ponadgimnazjalnych nr 2 w Kielcach. The objectives of the blended mobility which was held simultaneously were to:

-validate Geocaching trails in Kielce

-meet the press, radio and television to present the project outcomes: that was done on Wednesday 26 (on the occasion of the European Day of Languages – Our coordinator spoke on the local radio; our students held workshops in the city museums), as well as on the following day in Kielce during the Geocaching activities and the Flashmob, when journalists followed the groups through the city

centre and interviewed a few of them. The partners held prototype international dissemination events on different days:

Monday 24th - country presentations at the school conference room (each partner built a stand and advertised their products);

Wednesday 26th Geocaching in the city centre (A walk of Independence around Kielce) and sharing info with the locals.

Thursday 27th Meeting a Board of Teachers and Experts in order to disseminate the most meaningful results and products - teachers and students from the partners' schools presented project outcomes by showing the trails that had been made and tested and their positive effects on students' motivation.

A meeting at the town hall was also made to highlight the educational opportunity of using Geocaching in classes. On this occasion the major of the city congratulated participants about the goodness of the initiatives for the sake of a better future.

In addition to this, two students from the Italian Erasmus+ Team spent the whole month of September in Kielce on a work placement at the hosting school, meeting hundreds of students from the local community, and teaching them about Italy and about the project.

On Friday 28th a photo exhibition was held about best mobility memories - Photo Contest: "The Cache of Memory". Preparation for this contest/exhibition had been required by the host country, Poland, before the trip.

During the week posters were prepared to present the advantages of Geocaching to fellow Polish students.

A big dissemination event with press & television presenting the film about the project Geocaching was finally modified as the film is to be made for the M6 mobility to Italy.

The Polish experts helped the partners planning the GEOCACHING DISSEMINATION DAYS (D-Days), and the Italian and French teachers helped partners during a session on Thursday morning to create the Geocaching event on 12th October, on the occasion of the official Erasmus Days promoted by the French National Agency – both on the EU platform (see <https://www.generation-erasmus.fr/erasmusdays2018/>) and on www.Geocaching.com.

Video shooting of main activities for final project video by the Polish team- to be revealed in the film in Italy. Website implemented.