

## Report on the exchange project between Frederikshavn and Erfurt

A class from a secondary school of Frederikshavn in Denmark spent 2 weeks in Erfurt. The first week served as an introduction to the region and was intended to encourage the students to use their German language skills and lose their fear of speaking. What they learned should make their second week's activity easier: the internship in a social institution.

### Monday, 31.10.2022: Erfurt

On Sunday evening the 30 Danish students arrived in Erfurt by bus from Frederikshavn. After a first quiet night we all got to know each other after breakfast and started our actions for the first day. Our program: getting to know Erfurt - historically, linguistically, culturally. We met in the city center and started with an interactive worksheet. The students were given the task of looking around the city, finding advertisements, graffiti and other exciting things and taking notes on them. They also came into contact with the people of Erfurt by asking passers-by on the street about Erfurt's culture, politics and language. They then presented their findings with the entire class. After the lunch break, the Danish students visited the "Topf und Söhne" exhibition. The construction company for cremation ovens supplied Buchenwald and Auschwitz with cremation ovens, in addition to other concentration camps. A film introduced us to the topic. After the visit, the class was able to exchange ideas and process what they had learned. The final event of the day was the cathedral of Erfurt.



### Tuesday, 01.02.2022: Weimar

Our Tuesday morning started after breakfast, this time on the premises of the VHS Erfurt. The class was divided into 3 groups and walked through 3 stations during the morning, each on different topics. The old town of Erfurt and its sights were summarized and linked to the events of the previous day. Station 2 brought some fun to the class with the song "Thüringen" by Reinald Grebe which offers funny information about Thuringia as a federal state with all its facets (Bratwurst, dialect...). In preparation for the excursion to Weimar in the afternoon, the students read "Erlkönig" by J.W. von Goethe and learned about the lives of Goethe and Schiller. After a relaxing lunch and the task of buying tickets on their own, we took the train to Weimar. Once there, the class was

given the task of independently finding the statue of Goethe and Schiller by contacting the people of Weimar. A worksheet with questions about the city was worked on and so the students were able to discover the cultural stronghold of Weimar on their own. The famous "Biebereis", which originated from a hobby in a student's apartment, was of course not to be missed.

### **Wednesday, 02.02.2022: Jena**

Wednesday morning started again at the VHS with 3 learning stations. We looked at the German school system and talked about different types of schools. Another focus was the Reformation and what Luther did, which was presented with a fun comic. In addition, the students were introduced to Jena, the city of light, and its great inventions, which could be explored after lunch. We learned a lot about the microscope and Carl Zeiss and were able to get acquainted with the university and the most important sights of the city.



### **Thursday, 03.02.2022: Concentration Camp Buchenwald**

Today we had a heavy diet on the program. Already in the morning we worked in our groups of the previous days on the topics of World War II, hatred and persecution of Jews and the concentration camp Buchenwald. Of course, the topic was also dealt with in the lessons at home in Denmark, but the information here on site had a completely different touch. We were preparing for the visit to the concentration camp in Buchenwald, where we planned a guided tour. The students were very interested and were stimulated to intensive discussions on the topics. Their already existing knowledge could be filled up with specific facts about Weimar and Buchenwald, which revealed to



them a comprehensive picture of the cruel events of German history. At the Buchenwald memorial, an icy wind and gray skies awaited us, making the atmosphere of the concentration camp seem even more real. The class soaked up the information from our motivated museum guide - everyone was very interested and took in the impressive surroundings. The return trip to Erfurt by bus and train gave them time to process what they had seen in an exchange with their classmates.

**Friday, 04.02.2022: Preparation for the internship**

Our last day of class - the preparation for the internship on the next Monday was now very important. For this purpose, the class got another review of the German clock and days of the week, learned how to fill out a typical office form and when it is appropriate to be on first-name terms. Today was all about getting along well with the daily routine of the internship next week. The students got into an active exchange with each other and diligently practiced their German skills.



**Saturday, 05.02.2022: Free time**

**Sunday, 06.02.2022: Leipzig**

At the end of the eventful week, our Danish friends went to the big city of Leipzig. After breakfast we were picked up by a bus in front of our hostel and taken to the Monument of the Battle of the Nations in Leipzig. The breathtaking structure with its size leaves no doubt that the world's largest and bloodiest battle until World War 1 took place here over 200 years ago - and that Napoleon's defeat began here. The students were overwhelmed by the large "Lake of Tears" that stands for the mourning of the victims and their families in front of the memorial. The sunny clear weather invited us to climb the steps of the monument to the top platform to enjoy the beautiful wide view over Leipzig. Now we took the streetcar to the city center. Here we marveled at the Augusteum with the Paulinum - unfortunately only from the outside, because it is closed on Sundays. A panoramic view of the Augustenplatz square revealed many historical facts about the city to the students. The church of Nikolei also had a lot to tell about the Monday demonstrations and the peaceful





revolution. After so much history, lunch was served and then a visit to the Leipzig Zoo was on the agenda.

**Monday, 07.11.2022 - Friday, 11.11.2022: Internship**

This week our Danish students spent an internship in different social institutions (day care center, old people's home, "Tafel"). Here they got a taste of a typical German working day and got to know the social sector in Germany better.

As a reward for their hard work, they had the opportunity to watch a soccer match in Leipzig on Wednesday evening. It was a complete success (Leipzig won) and we even got to see our danish football player Yussuf Poulsen play. We had a great time with cheering, Bratwurst and sports!

