Erasmus+ at Heinrich-Böll-Gymnasium Troisdorf

29 students from years 8 and 9 at Heinrich-Böll-Gymnasium Troisdorf take part at the Erasmus+project "World War II — Our history and its cultural legacy". The project, in which four more exchange-partners from different European countries are involved, runs for two years. The first meeting between the German students and their exchange partners from France, Poland, Czech Republic and Greece took place in Troisdorf from 21st to 25th January 2019.



Erasmus+ is a European-Union-support-programme to promote transnational cooperation and intercultural learning. The Heinrich-Böll-Gymnasium takes part for the first time so that the students can experience one of the school's leading aims to learn for Europe and the world.

After many meetings for preparing the first visit of the foreign guests in Germany, a welcoming evening and an overnight stay took place in a hostel in Cologne Deutz. The students presented their home schools and cities and got into first conversations with their exchange students. In a competition, the students also voted for a logo from suggestions from the five participating countries. The winner logo from Greece shows the flags as well as well-known sights from the capital cities of the five participating countries. At the same time the European flag and doves of peace are depicted, which symbolize a main goal of the Erasmus+ project: to keep peace in the European Union through intercultural exchange.

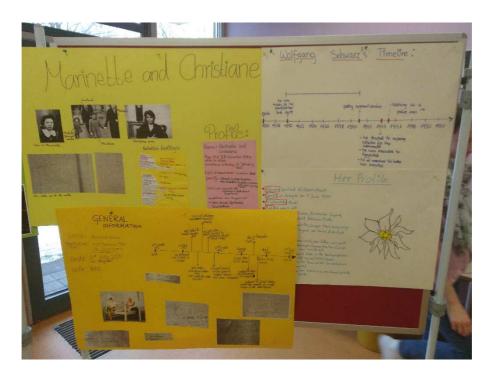


On day two the whole group went on a trip to Burg Vogelsang in Schleiden, a former Nazi school for future Nazi leaders. The students did a guided tour in English and were informed about the training of young men by the Nazis in the years 1936-39. Thus they could reflect the influence of education on young people. The won insights were recorded by small groups of German students who interviewed the foreign students on their thoughts and impressions in order to create a documentary in the postprocessing of the visit.



After a shared meal at the school canteen, the students were welcomed by their host families before the group went on a trip to Cologne on day three. There the students did a walkabout in Cologne Ehrenfeld called "On the trail of Edelweißpiraten" and a guided tour in the NS documentary center. After having visited the cells of the former prison of the Gestapo, the students participated in a workshop, in which they created posters on the biographies of former prisoners and freedom fighters.







On the fourth day the group did a trip to Remagen, where they visited the chapel "Schwarze Madonna" at the bank of the Rhine, which is a reminder of the former camp for German prisoners of war.



Afterwards the students did a guided tour through the museum of peace. In workshops the German students gave presentations on the fate of camp inmates. A special attention was paid to the presentation of the life of a contemporary witness who had visited the Heinrich-Böll-Gymnasium two months before and had told about his personal experiences of war as a young man near Koblenz.



At the end of the visit the students handcrafted doves of peace on which they wrote messages of peace. Those as well as the other results of the week in Germany were then presented at the Heinrich-Böll-Gymnasium in the afternoon. With this final get-together the visit to Germany got to an end and the foreign European partners left for their home countries.





After an exciting week in Germany, the German students of Heinrich-Böll-Gymnasium are looking forward to the visits of the partner schools until May 2020 and to get deeper insights into European history and cultures.