

Lisa Micomonaco's impressions about the meeting in Dortmund - Germany

Last week I had a great experience. On 29th November I flew to a big town in Germany, called Dortmund. I went there with four guys from my school because we joined the Erasmus project. Dortmund is in the north of Germany, it's very important because it's a fair-trade town. Fair trade is the English expression that refers to our Italian "commercio equo e solidale". The school that hosted us is very large and developed. It's a Fair-Trade school, so even the cafeteria food is from developing countries. German students study the same subjects as us, but they also have Cooking, Art and Music. Five countries have joined the Erasmus project: Italy, Germany, Denmark, England and Austria. Thanks to this project we could meet new people from different countries, so we could speak different languages and make friends with foreign people. At school we worked in groups. My group was made up of three German people and three foreign people (an Austrian girl, an English boy and me). The first day we had to go round the town looking for Fair-Trade shops and we found a great sport shop. After that we went to the city hall and the authorities welcomed us but in German. It was really difficult to understand so I didn't like it so much. The day after it was "Chocolate Time". First we cooked chocolate biscuits at school. The kitchen is large and comfortable. The activity was very interesting and funny. Then we reached the chocolate workshop. There two girls showed us a video about how chocolate is made, from beans to bars. On Wednesday we visited Cologne, another big town two hours by train from Dortmund. After the sightseeing in the town, we could visit the chocolate museum. It was the most interesting time in Germany, because we could touch the cacao plants and have a taste of their beans. We could see the chocolate machines and a chocolate fountain. I saw how a chocolate bar is made and at last I ate it. Only 5% of chocolate is fairly traded in the world. It means that the other 95% is produced by workers who don't receive a fair price and maybe children are still forced to work and they can't get free chocolate. This is why fair-trade helps social programmes. A famous German fair-trade company is "Gepa". It sells every kind of Fair-trade items, from clothes to food. It's more than fair, it's fair+ because they always reinvest money in Fair Trade. In the afternoons we usually had freetime. We could go round Christmas markets where people sell only food. We saw the biggest Christmas tree in the world. It is 45 metres high and has got 48000 lights. We went ice-skating with my partner and the others. It was a wonderful experience and we had a lot of fun. A small train took us in to a fairy park with lightened trees. In the evenings I stayed in my host family. There are five people: Mr and Mrs Honest and their three daughters. My guest pupil is Lea, she is twelve years old and she is a pretty girl. The family is so friendly and very kind. We usually had dinner with milk and cereal or nutella bread.