



GREEN HEART

FINAL REPORT

"All about the project"

August, 2022

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EPILOGUE...

PROLOGUE...

Education is one of the most powerful tools to promote sustainability at the individual level and in the daily life of each of us. For this reason, UNESCO defines the concept of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as follows; "It empowers students to make informed decisions and take responsible actions for environmental unity, economic feasibility and a fair society while respecting cultural diversity. It is about lifelong learning and is an integral part of quality education. It achieves its purpose by transforming society." (UNESCO, 2020).

The key actions of this definition, which are directly in line with the EU's Green Deal targets, can be summarized as follows;

- *respect for cultural diversity
- *environmental unity
- *responsible actions for a fair society
- *lifelong learning

It is essential that children learn through sensory organs in the method of living learning, which was founded by Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, and that knowledge becomes permanent without difficulty. In this way, students have the chance to grasp the information they will need later in natural ways. According to the researches, in order to keep time constant, people remember 10% of what they read, 20% of what they hear, 30% of what they see, 50% of what they see and hear, 70% of what they say and 90% of what they do. This shows once again that the student's participation in the practice greatly increases the efficiency and retention of learning. According to Edgar Dale's Pyramid of Learning, Dale describes the value of the "direct, first hand experiences that make up the foundation of our learning," he also makes it clear that "human life cannot, of course, be lived exclusively on the direct, concrete, sensory level," and frequently learning tends towards higher levels of abstraction. The Cone "classifies instructional messages only in terms of greater or lesser concreteness or abstractness," and it is not an "exact rank order of learning processes." The teacher and learner must be able to move through all levels. (Masters;2013)

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1. Project Partners

"Green Heart" is an Erasmus+ project which received fund under the Erasmus + KA229 School Partnership program. Through the School Exchange Partnerships, schools are offered the opportunity to collaborate with schools in program member countries to exchange good practices. Under the strategic partnerships for the exchange of good practices, this type of partnership requires that all partners consist only of schools.

This project team consisting of 6 partners set out for this project journey in January, 2020. The target group of the project is 3-7 aged kindergarten students and partner country teachers directly and also our other colleagues and parents indirectly. The motivation of our project theme has created by our coordinator school Vrtec Črnuče (Slovenia) within the frame of combining our educational activities in our schools with nature-based activities aiming inclusion of disadvantaged groups.

- Vrtec Crnuce, SLOVENIA (The coordinator)
- Pasvalio lopšelis-darželis Liepaitėi LITHUANIA
- Kindergarten 141 "Slaveykova polyana", BULGARIA
- 1o Nipiagogeio Eleftheroupolis Kavallas, GREECE
- Arpaçbahşiş Yardımcılar İlkokulu, TURKEY
- Vrtec Miskolin, SLOVENIA

1.2. Project Description

Due to the use of modern technologies, extended working hours of parents and consequently less and less exercise, today's children are different from generations before them. Movement in the fresh air has been proven to strengthen attention and the ability to learn at the same time it also affects the appropriate weight of children.

It is aimed to share examples of good practice with the partner organizations of six kindergartens with each other and transfer them to new environments with the Green Heart project. In addition, it is found that we face similar challenges in the areas of inclusion as well children from less stimulating learning environments and children with special needs, as well as in the field of strengthening language and social competences.

Together with partners who recognized the same problem in their work, it is planned to solve this problem by implementing the Green Heart. The era ahead of us requires flexible people who are able to work creatively, both in a team and individually. To deal with these challenges, the Green Heart project can be an ideal solution, as it would affect all the child's senses and through them to all areas of child development. Continuous visits to the forest would become a habit for children, as it provides them with plenty of opportunities for active play with exploration and versatile activity.

Research shows that, with the help of the freedom provided by the forest, children's self-confidence and self-confidence and social skills. Mutual relations are better, there are fewer outbursts of anger and aggression, there are more cooperation, children are easier and faster to divide into groups and offer mutual help. Because of the visual and of sensory experiences, their spoken and written expression improves, previously reserved and shy children in the forest they begin to express themselves verbally and non-verbally (Györek, 2012).

Children calm down, relax and significantly improve their motor skills in the forest. The more the child moves, the more sensory perception and synapses are established in the brain. Most of them, as much as 75%, are established precisely in the pre-school period up to seven years of age.

1.3. Project Objectives

Children in early childhood are growing in an increasingly urbanized and industrialized environment (traffic, pollution, population density and other risks) without making any connection with the natural environment even without going out. While younger age groups are the most affected by the negative conditions created by environmental problems, on the other hand, it is the children who will play an active role in the solution of environmental problems.

For this reason, we need our students in the early childhood period to gain an "ecologically literate" and "global citizen identity". At this point, we should combine the time of children with school education life, to reconnect with the environment they live in, by doing and living. We need to increase learning experiences and to integrate outdoor activities with preschool-primary school curriculum lesson outcomes. For this reason, it is among our goals to raise individuals who take responsible actions for an inclusive and "fair society"

With the selected project goals, we want to achieve:

1. STRENGTHENING OF THE TEACHING PROFESSIONS:

Strengthening the professional development of professionals in the field teaching methodology, language competence, development of management and organizational competence of partners' organizations and promoting the use of ICT in all areas of work.

2. IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION:

Exchange of good practices, methods and experiences from the fields social inclusion and early learning of a foreign language and internationalization of partner organizations.

3. SOCIAL INCLUSION:

Better connection of all included children and upgrading of intercultural and intergenerational integration.

4. ECOLOGICAL LITERACY

Making children play an active role in the solution of environmental problems and gain an "ecologically literate" and "global citizen" identity.

1. ACTIVITIES

During implementation of the project, project partners had both national and international activities to reach project objectives and enable exchanging good practices. Unfortunately, due to Covid 19 Pandemic, at the first year of the project, physical mobilities are cancelled and had to be implemented virtually. At the second year, all activities went on usual way.

2.1. Learning Teaching, Training Activities

2.1.1. LTT 1 –Turkey

The meeting was held on the 27th September-1st October, 2021.

At the meeting in Turkey:

- All members of the project team introduced themselves,
- Each partner organization briefly presented its organization
- All members were acquainted in detail with the project and project documentation,
- The Coordinator school Vrtec Crnuce introduced the goals and the Erasmus + program to the newcomers from Bulgaria, Lithuania and Slovenia, Miškolin Kindergarten and informed the partners about the expected results, preparation of the evaluation and dissemination plan, preparation of an information leaflet, publication of the project on eTwinning platforms (Twinspace classroom preparation) and School Education Gateway,
- We presented the logo of the project, the mascots of organizations.
- We talked about forest education, how to include it in the curriculum.
- All partners carried out outdoor classrooms: forest in Erdemli, met with the eTwinning portal, listened to a presentation of the school system of the host country Forest practice in nature (sea and forest school).
- A round table was held: a discussion on appropriate education about the forest, the environment and their inclusion in educational work; workshop in nature - art in the forest;

The mobility partners in Turkey were from Bulgaria, Turkey, Lithuania and Slovenia and virtually attended by partners from Greece.

2.1.2. LTT 2 – Lithuania

The LTT activity was held on the 8th -10th November, 2021. A total of 15 participants participated in the mobility. The cultural organizations of Pasvalys, Biržai and Anykščiai cooperated with project team. Meeting was intended to review and evaluation of the work done so far, review of the reports of the quality group, monitoring of the progress in the production of results, planning of project activities, preparation of an interim report and a more detailed review of the dissemination plan.

According to Program of the meeting, participants had;

- Welcome program and walking tour in the kindergarten
- Presentation on the education of children with special needs using natural materials,
- Activities in the kindergarten yard: art, mathematics, music,
- Education about Pasvalys Region (Museum and town),
- Presentation of completed work, Mobility Tool and discussions.
- Evaluation of the meeting.

The local newspaper also did an interview with project team at the end of the meeting.

2.1.3. LTT 3 – Greece

The LTT activity was held on the 28th February -05th March, 2022

At the meeting in Greece:

- The participants visited the kindergarten but due to the Covid situation, it was possible only to visit the kindergarten when there were no more children in the kindergarten
- Each partner country presented its school system and themselves; a discussion between the partners followed.
- It was discussed that the impact of the forest on the inclusion of children from less stimulating learning environments and migrant children.
- It was exchanged and written down examples of good practices.
- It was carried out that the activities in the forest (making and lowering boats).
- The institutions related to the project (living in nature) were visited by partners
- In the end, it was evaluated and recorded that the meeting outcomes and planned the next mobility and next project tasks

2.1.4. LTT 4 – Bulgaria

The LTT activity was held on the 11th April -15th April, 2022

At the meeting in Bulgaria, participants had;

- Kindergarten welcome ceremony, official program, registration, presentation of guests,
- Presentation of a kindergarten classroom for children with speech problems,
- Project meeting about parents how host school work with the children's late needs,
- Work session - evaluation of the work done so far, or pre-prepared, pre-prepared reports of the quality team,
- Workshop with children,
- Project meeting - methods of their application in school, exchange of good practices, monitoring of progress in achieving results
- Visit of the municipality and the mayor
- Meeting with the director and teachers of 107 Elementary School "Han Krum"
- Seminar on Ecology, conservation and outdoor activities
- Workshop in the kindergarten: planting herbs with the children
- Preparation of an interim report of a previously prepared dissemination plan,
- made up fairy tales Workshop with children - how they work with natural materials

2.1.5. LTT 5 – Slovenia

The LTT activity was held on the 23rd - 27th May, 2022. It was last LTT activity of the project.

At the meeting in Slovenia, participants had a five-day mobility.

Day 1

- Welcome ceremony in the Kindergarten, official program
- Presentation of the Črnuče kindergarten
- Workshop – exchange of good practice in classroom
- Presentation of forest pedagogy in Črnuče Kindergarten and other partner organizations
- Visit Postojna Cave

Day 2

- Presentation of the Miškolin kindergarten, short children's program
- Presentation of good practice in nature
- City tour of Ljubljana with guide

Day 3 FINAL CONFERENCE

- Opening of the conference
- Visit and participation in the event Forest, water, grinder
- Project summary (by Lidija Kopasić); implementation of the project by partner organizations (each organization 15 min)
- Workshops - Innovative forestry activities
- Conclusion of the conference

Day 4

- Visit Bled
- Project meeting
- Event at the Cultural Center, by children

Day 5

- Visit Sapramiška unit
- Work shop in the Kindergarten
- Project meeting (Evaluation of meetings and final conference, preparation of a wide dissemination of the project and its results, preparation of a draft final report)

2.2. Local Activities

In addition to international/main project activities, all partner schools have been responsible for implementing some local tasks in their organizations. The local activities can be classified as follows regarding the implementing time;

- Having 14 Online Meetings through project schedule,
- Creating logos,
- Creating mascots,
- Collaborative logo design,
- Creating mascot stories with children,
- Creating leaflets,
- Creating project boards and updating periodically,

- Creating eTwinning project,
- Managing Twinspace,
- Implementing project tests,
- Creating videos about schools,
- Presentation on Twinspace and eTwinning portals,
- Presenting and discussion on forest practices,
- Creating audio stories of mascots,
- Creating online book,
- Creating Forest Etiquette Boards
- Creating project diaries,
- Creating progress report at every 4 months,

5. ASSESSMENT AND QUALITY CONTROL

Project evaluation and quality controls are handled in four ways;

➤ PROGRESS REPORTS:

Headed by Coordinator school Vrtec Crnuce, partners schools have prepared a 4-monthly reports summarizing the activities they implemented at their schools at every four months. All reports have been followed up by coordinator school.

➤ PROGRESS TESTS

By help of partner school Vrtec Miskolin, initial tests have been prepared and applied to teachers both involved and uninvolved in mobilities, students and parents of partner schools.

The attitudes of the participants towards the project were tried to be evaluated as follows:

ANALYSIS 1



GREEN HEART PROJECT

ANONYMOUS QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS

107 RESPONDENTS

1. Are you aware that your school/kindergarten is involved in a new Erasmus+ project called Green heart?
 - Yes. **85%**
 - No. **15%**
2. How do you feel about the main topics of the project which are social inclusion and the early learning of a foreign language?
 - I think topics are relevant and the project is a good opportunity for growth and social development. **98%**
 - Topics aren't interesting or relevant to children and the project doesn't seem appropriate for me. **1%**
 - I don't care about Erasmus+ projects. **1%**

ANALYSIS 2

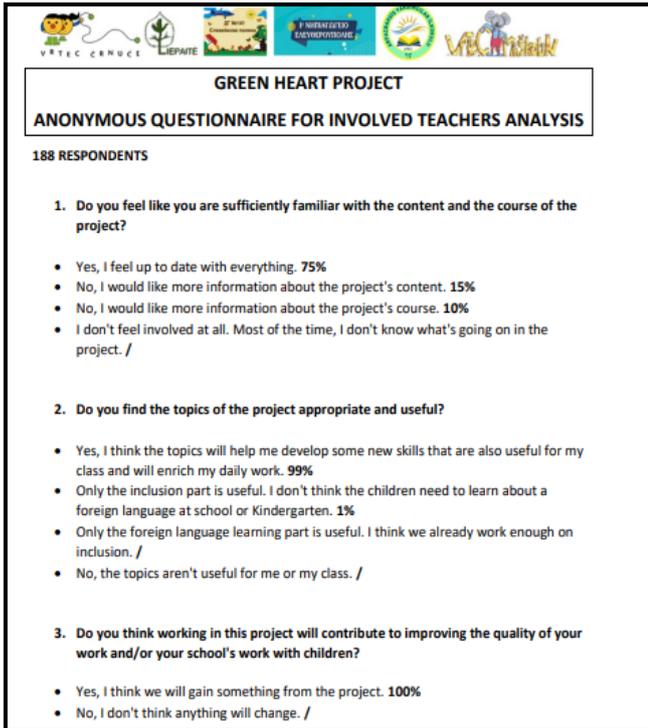


GREEN HEART PROJECT

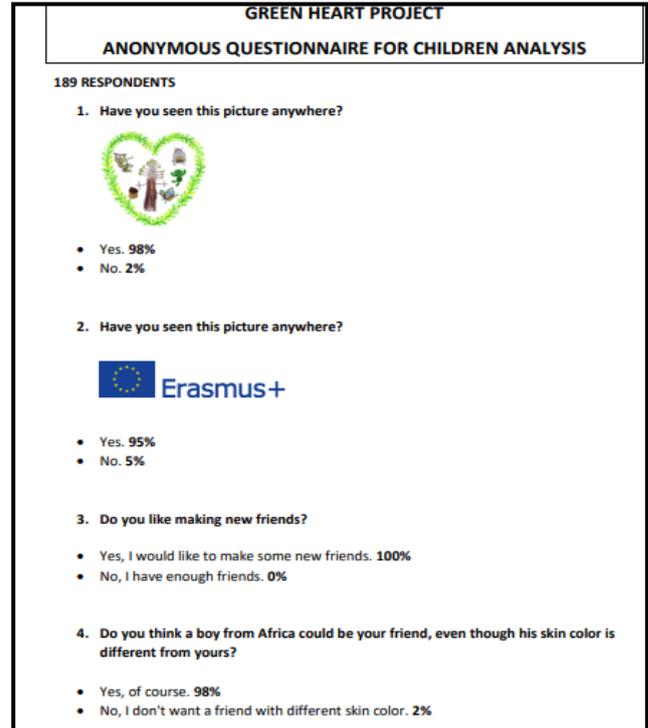
ANONYMOUS QUESTIONNAIRE FOR UNINVOLVED TEACHERS ANALYSIS

1. Are you aware that your school/kindergarten is involved in a new Erasmus+ project called Green heart?
 - Yes. **98%**
 - No. **2%**
2. How do you feel about the main topics of the project which are social inclusion and the early learning of a foreign language?
 - I think topics are relevant and the project is a good opportunity for growth and social development. **100%**
 - Topics aren't interesting or relevant to children and the project doesn't seem appropriate for me. **/**
 - I don't care about Erasmus+ projects. **/**

ANALYSIS 3



ANALYSIS 4



As a result of tests, it is observed that while direct participants of the project appreciate the experience and contributions of project topic to their professional development, indirect participants are highly aware of the project and impact of it.

➤ QUALITY CONTROL TESTS FOR ACTIVITIES

As a task of partner school Arpaçbahşiş Yardımcılar İlkokulu, evaluation for quality controls for each activities have been done for every mobility and workshops. A rating scale has been prepared for each mobility. The activity has been evaluated in terms of content, material, environment, duration, workshop leaders/trainers and host country of the activity. Here are some charts from test result;

CHART 1

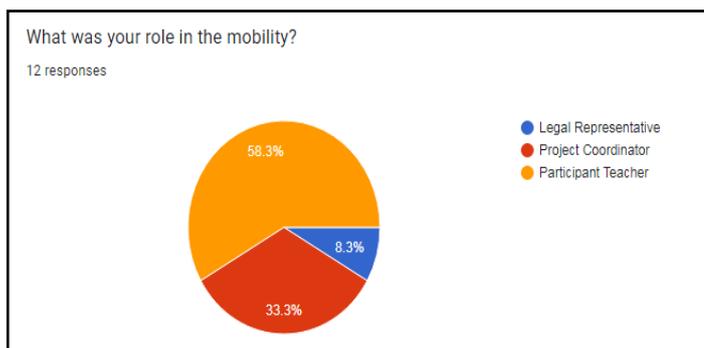


CHART 2

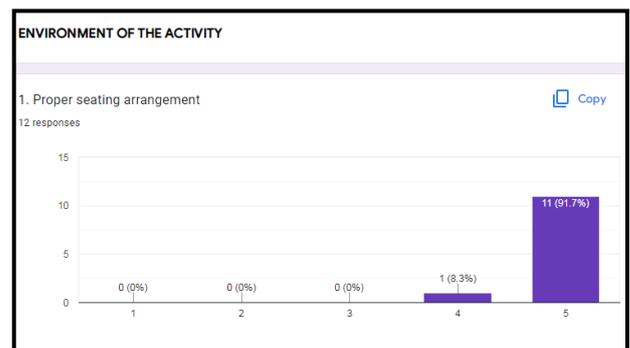


CHART 3

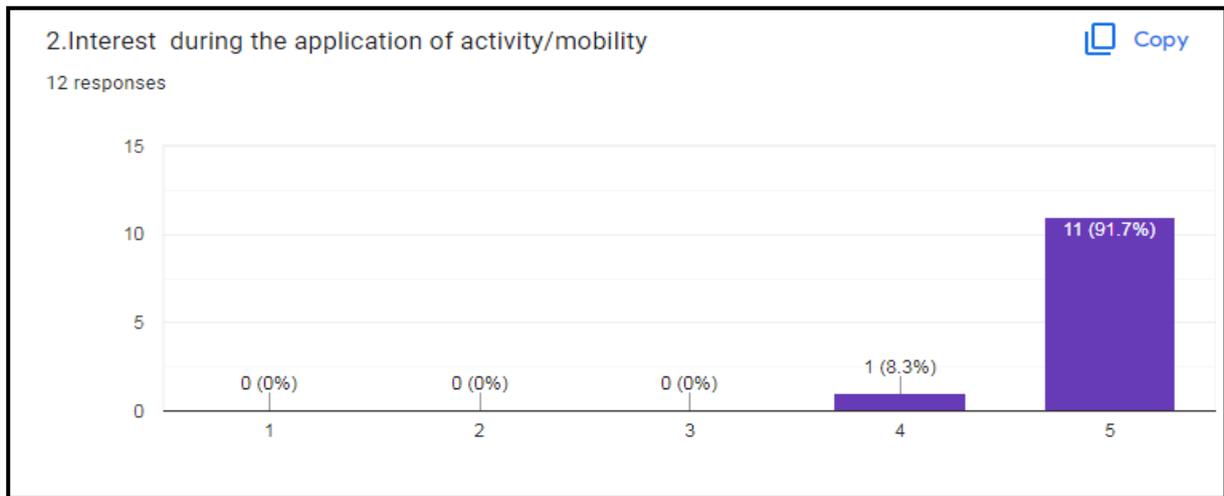


CHART 4

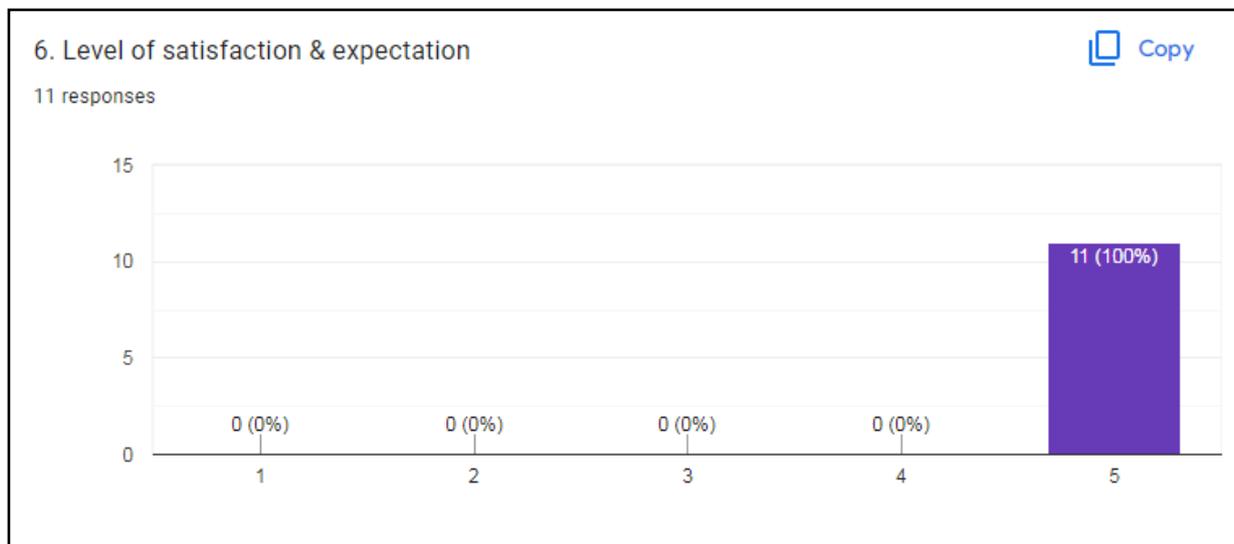


CHART 5

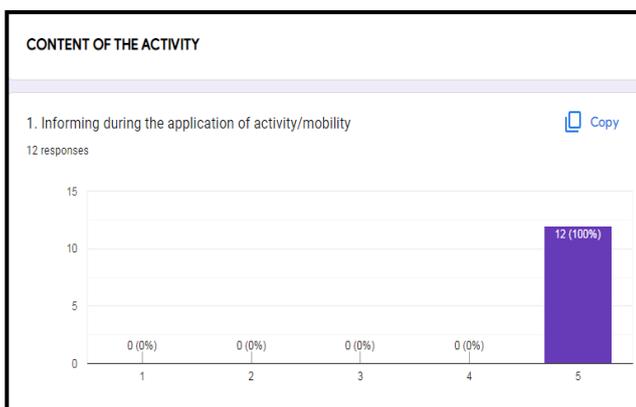
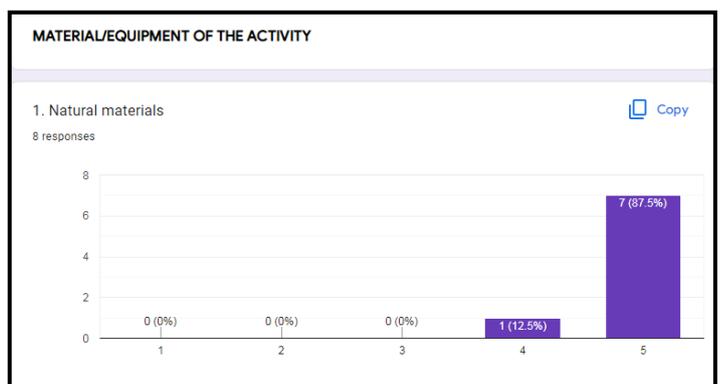


CHART 6



According to average of total mobility statistics,

- ✓ At the %100 of rate, participants have been pleased with instructions and informing during mobilities,
- ✓ At the % 95,6 of rate, participants have been interested in implementation of activities,
- ✓ At the % 92,4 of rate, participants have been pleased with program of the mobility,
- ✓ At the % 92,18 of rate, participants have been pleased with content of the activities,
- ✓ At the % 95,6 of rate, participants have been pleased with duration of the activities,
- ✓ At the % 95,6 of rate, participants have been declared their satisfaction and expectation level as perfect,
- ✓ At the % 96,38 of rate, participants have been satisfied with contribution to their professional development.

➤ DRAWING TESTS

In the last stage of assessment and evaluation process, student participation has been examined as a task of Turkish partner. As our pupils are younger age, it has been used the Drawing Evaluation Method/ the Picture Evaluation Form by partner school Arpaçbahşiş Yardımcılar School for they have used this technique before in their local project "Sea and Forest School". At the last stage of the project, the question "What have you learned/remembered from project?" was asked to the students and they were asked to think and draw on this issue.

DRAWING 1



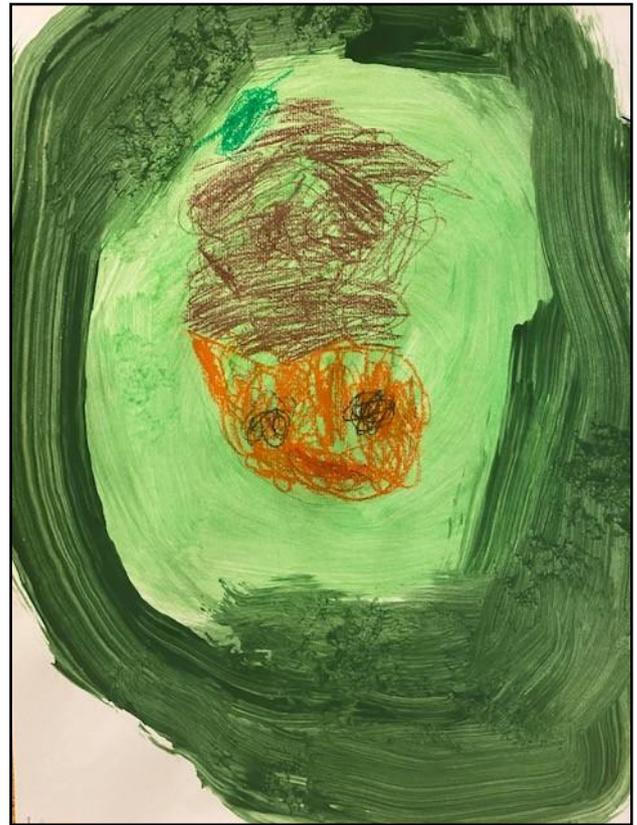
DRAWING 2



DRAWING 4



DRAWING 5



DRAWING 6



DRAWING 7



For the analysis of the pictures, The Picture Evaluation Form was used including 11 criteria determined for the purposes of the Project.

Criteria										
Illustrates vivid footprints in nature	Illustrates the relationship between the sea and the forest	Illustrates the link between nature and human	Illustrates objects in nature as teaching materials	Illustrates colors in the nature properly	Illustrates the link between nature and itself	Illustrates games in nature	Illustrates collaborative activities	Illustrates controlled risks in nature	Illustrates the creative or different aspects of nature	Illustrates endemic species in nature

According to the data obtained, the frequency distribution of each criterion was made and accordingly the realization percentage of each criterion was calculated. According to the findings obtained, it is found that project is effective in achieving the desired goals for students and provides integration of education with nature. In addition, it can be said that the project provided enables students to use nature correctly and effectively, and that they see it as part of their education and contribute to their internalization.

5. DISSEMINATION

In compliance with project dissemination plan and Erasmus+ program principals, dissemination are handled as follows;

To share results within our organisations

- Project meetings with teachers, students and parents,
- Project boards (updated periodically),
- Project activity corners in the classes,
- School website news,
- Experience transfer meetings after each mobilities.
- Hanging roll-up and poster on school walls.

To share results with other organisations and the public

- Printing poster of the project,
- Creating a virtual project in eTwinning portal,
- Using eTwinning Live and Twinspace,
- Uploading project activities to Twinspace periodically,
- Publishing a common leaflet,
- Online nature book including project activities,
- Project presentation to local institutions,
- Publishing project activities on Re & De Newsletters,
- Publishing project outcomes as articles,
- Local press
- Presenting project on Erasmus Days activities,
- Webinars

EPILOGUE...

Who believes a seagull can drown in the sea!

Of course, children ... And also, those who do not forget to look from the eyes of children. Good thing is that they believe, otherwise what happens to the seagulls fall into the sea? Who would hear the call of help of the creatures trapped in the cities and who would come to their aid? It is hard to get adults away from prejudices and convince them that there is a seagull in a biscuit box.

Even more difficult is that to reach a seagull falling into the sea where it belongs, to get to the sky.

(Dođan GÜNDÜZ, A Seagull in the Biscuit Box)

