

**Description of the activity. Describe the content, methodology and the results of this activity.**

- **Who were the participants in the activity (including local participants)?**
- **How was this activity related to or integrated with the normal activities**

The week spent in Germany by UK students included sports and cultural visits. The approach/methodology was for students from both schools – UK & Germany - to interact as much as possible and, for the sports, for all students to reflect on gender inclusivity of the different sports. The results were very positive as students worked well together, in pairs and teams, and gained an insight into sports which they knew little about. Students also reflected on the how gender inclusive sports were which was thought provoking and involved some interesting debate.

Participants were aged 14-15 years old, mixed boys and girls, from each school; plus 2 teachers from Newport and a number from Germany.

The sports activities were related to PE lessons (a German PE teacher was involved) at school although the sports were atypical; the cultural activities were not typical of normal activities although might be considered similar to a typical school trip.

Newport students were given a tour of Carolus Magnus Gymnasium which was very interesting as there were some clear differences – uniform in particular – as well as many things the 2 schools have in common.

Newport students then attended lessons and, while differences were noted (the limited use of technology in particular), students agreed that lessons had a lot in common with the UK.

Students from both schools then worked together on initial questionnaires considering the activities that they would be doing during the week.

In the afternoon of the first day all students took part in ultimate frisbee. This was enjoyed by all and played in mixed teams to encourage students to consider gender inclusivity.

On the second day we travelled to the Netherlands to meet up with the Dutch and Spanish schools for a very successful day of sport involving all 4 schools. This started with ice skating where students (and some teachers) were split into groups based on past experience. Then floorball was introduced – new to UK students – and football was also played.

On the third day students travelled to Aachen, a city of great historical interest near the Dutch and Belgian borders. The morning was spent on a tour of the city including cathedral and other places of note. In the afternoon students worked in mixed gender and nationality groups in an 'Escape Room' activity; this required teamwork and cooperation.

Thursday was spent in Cologne where we travelled by train. Some students went up Cologne cathedral's spire – a long and tiring climbing with many steps but worth it for fantastic views. Students then had free time to explore the city.

Friday was evaluation day: students considered how they had benefitted from the activities and how gender inclusive they were. Students were encouraged to consider how they might improve the activities for future participants. A very positive attitude was noted among students and both German and British interacted well, considering thoughtfully and maturely the different sports.

**How did the participation in this activity benefit the involved participants?**

Participation in the activities was clearly beneficial to the students as they improved their understanding of cultural differences between the two countries. Interestingly, as one British student commented, while there were clearly cultural differences, the two countries had a lot more in common than differences. The team work and communication skills employed during sports and activities were good to see and the fact that the students had to think about sport (gender inclusivity) in a way they might not normally. This focus on gender inclusivity produced

occasional differences of opinion between boys and girls which were debated in a mature fashion but the overall sense was that both boys and girls had a better idea about gender inclusivity as a result. Indeed, a number of meaningful suggestions were made by students in the feedback session at the end of the week about how to make certain sports more accessible for all and thus more gender inclusive. In particular the UK students, accustomed to having PE lessons in single sex classes, were intrigued to discover this was not the case in the Germany which meant that the sharing of ideas in this area caused quite a lively debate.