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Report on the Implementation of the Project “Multiculturalism as a Challenge for Education”

Raport z realizacji projektu „Wielokulturowość wyzwaniem dla edukacji”

As part of the project “Multiculturalism as a Challenge for Education”, a team of four employees of the Department of Didactics, Institute of Pedagogy of the University of Maria Curie-Skłodowska (UMCS) in Lublin – Dr hab. Teresa Parczewska, Dr hab. Urszula Oszwa, Dr Justyna Sala-Suszyńska and Dr Ewa Sosnowska-Bielicz – took part in a study visit to Laugarnesskóli in Reykjavik,¹ Iceland on May 30 – June 2, 2022. The main goals of the project are: increasing the teaching competences of the staff and establishing teaching and research cooperation between the above-mentioned institution and the UMCS. The project is implemented from the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014–2021 funds and from national funds (under the agreement no. EEA/19/K1/D1/W/0013W/0064).

The program of the three-day visit included the introduction to the Icelandic education system, the core curriculum and its implementation at the level of early childhood education (grades 1–4). Particularly interesting for the employees of the Department of Didactics were the practical ways of implementing the idea of including the families of emigrants in the local community, including learning the rules of organizing it, both in terms of program and education, as well as administrative and legal aspects.

¹ <https://laugarnesskoli.is/>

On the Icelandic side, many Laugarnesskóli employees were involved in the course of introductory meetings, including: director Sigríður Heiða Bragadóttir, deputy director Björn Gunnlaugsson and a teacher who conducts classes with students for whom Icelandic is not the first language. In addition, there was a meeting at the Education Department with Ms Magdalena Elísabet Andrésdóttir,² a Polish-language linguistic and cultural mediator, who presented the specificity of the Icelandic education system, with particular emphasis on the direction of work with immigrant students and families. Representatives of the Polish side presented the characteristics of the organization and program of studies in preschool and early school education at the UMCS.



In addition to the above-mentioned activities, the participants had the opportunity to participate in activities carried out as part of early childhood education, participated in conversations with teachers, who in their teaching practice work with students from emigrant families, and meetings with students of Polish origin attending Laugarnesskóli.

The results of the study visit include: initial outline of joint research plans and the emerging concept of using multicultural experiences to improve the quality of teacher education in the field of preschool and early school education.

The project “Multiculturalism as a Challenge for Education” received funding amounting to EUR 6,740 from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway as part of the EEA grants. The aim of the project was to create conditions conducive to the pro-

² <https://mml.reykjavik.is/>



professional development of researchers of the Department of Didactics employed at the Institute of Pedagogy of the UMCS and to establish long-term cooperation between the Faculty of Pedagogy and Psychology of the above-mentioned university and the Laugarnesskóli School in Reykjavik.

The EEA Funds represent the contribution of Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway to creating a green, competitive and inclusive Europe. There are two overall goals: to reduce economic and social inequality in Europe and to strengthen bilateral relations between the Donor Countries and the 15 EU countries of Central and Southern Europe and the Baltic Sea area. The three Donor States work closely with the EU under the European Economic Area Agreement (EEA). The Donors have provided EUR 3.3 billion in consecutive fund programs between 1994 and 2014. The EEA funds for 2014–2021 amount to EUR 1.55 billion.

Priorities for this period are:

- 1) innovation, research, education and competitiveness,
- 2) social inclusion, youth employment and poverty reduction,
- 3) environment, energy, climate change and low-carbon economy,
- 4) culture, civil society, good governance and fundamental rights,
- 5) justice and internal affairs.

The EEA Funds are jointly funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, whose contribution is based on their GDP. Eligibility for the funds is based on meeting criteria set by the EU Cohesion Fund, intended for member states with a gross domestic income per capita below 90% of the EU average.



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competitive and inclusive Europe**