

REPORT ON THE PROJECT OF COOPERATION IN EEA GRANTS

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Place:	Iceland and the Czech Republic

In November 2021 I had the unique opportunity to apply for an exchange with the Icelandic school TÆKNISKÓLINN together with eleven students from our school.

On Sunday 7 November, twelve Icelandic students with five teachers came to Jihlava.

They were all very tired after the long and tiring journey the Icelanders had made, so everyone quickly got acquainted with their accommodation partner.

We started the whole project by getting to know all the Icelandic students and their teachers so that we all got to know each other well and establish new friendships between the students. The part of the project in which the Icelanders were supposed to be in the Czech Republic for 14 days was cut down to only 10 days. The reason for this was that the teacher from Iceland fell ill with covid 19.

But in spite of this unpleasant situation we managed to accomplish a lot. First we went to the coal power plant Ledvice. This power plant was interesting for the Icelandic students because they don't have anything like it in Iceland. Iceland has clean energy from geothermal springs, while our

republic still uses coal-fired power plants. We learnt a lot about the operation of this power plant today and in the past.

The next stop was Dolní Vítkovice, where black coal used to be mined and processed. We toured the whole area with expert commentary. With a stop at the highest tower of the Botl Tower. After the interpretation we went to see the small world of technology, where the biggest attraction for the Icelandic students was the car simulator and the opportunity to sit in an old damaged Felicia and a damaged 120. It was a long drive from Ostrava to Jihlava, so we shortened it by listening to Czech and Icelandic songs on the speaker we brought on the bus.

At the weekend we took the Icelanders to Prague. In Prague we had a guide who showed us interesting places. The Orloj and Charles Bridge were the ones we admired the most. After the tour, we were given a few hours off, so we walked around Prague and bought some souvenirs. To show some nice nature of the Highlands, we took the Icelanders to the Lipnice castle, where Adam Smejkal told us something about the castle. After the explanation and tour of the castle we went for a walk around the stone quarries.

We also showed Jihlava. In Jihlava we went underground and to the biggest church in Jihlava, namely St. James Church, where Dominik showed us the new roof on the church, the view from the tower and finally played the organ.

Due to the previously mentioned covid situation, our last trip was to Dukovany. We were all very excited to go there because we were going to tour the power plant. Upon arrival, we found out that due to the pandemic conditions, we could only see the information center. Everyone was disappointed because a lot of Icelanders had signed up for the project just to see the nuclear power plant. But even the info centre was interesting, where we could see a model of a nuclear reactor and there were graphite rods to see.

The next day we were visited by Ing. Dana Drábová, Ph.D., dr. h. c. mult., Czech nuclear physicist, chairwoman of the State Office for Nuclear Safety. She gave us a lecture on nuclear energy in the Czech Republic. And unfortunately, this was the end of the project in the Czech Republic.

Before the next part of the project, we had online English training on professional English vocabulary to help us understand better in Iceland. Our journey to Iceland started at the bus station in Jihlava in the early hours. The first part of the journey was from Jihlava to Munich by minibus and took about 8 hours. We checked in at Munich airport upon arrival and waited for our flight. We flew with IcelandAir. The plane ride directly to Iceland took 4 hours and the time change was 2 hours back. After arriving in Keflavik, Iceland, we re-boarded the minibus and drove an hour to the capital city of Reykjavik. In Reykjavik we all said hello to our friends.

The next day we were introduced to the program and parts of the school where I was able to have a t-shirt made with my own print to commemorate this project. Later we saw the oldest house in Iceland and a small hydroelectric power plant from 1904, which was the source for the first few houses with electricity. What surprised me most was that previously light bulbs were very expensive and people would buy one bulb for, say, 2 houses and then borrow it between them.

On our first day out of school we went to see the third largest geothermal power plant, which has a capacity of 303MW of electricity and 133MWth of heat energy which it sends in pipes to Reykjavik where it heats houses with it. Reykjavík is 25 kilometres away from this plant and the temperature drop of the hot water is only 2°C. After the tour of the power plant, we went on a three kilometres hike to a natural swimming pool, which was a stream with a temperature of 38°. It was very unusual to be digging in the stream at this time and there was still unmelted snow next to us.

The next two days we had interesting lectures and discussions at school. The first lecture was from ON, a company that also focuses on street lighting and tries to make lighting as efficient as possible without having a big impact on nature. We also learned about Carbfix, a company that converts carbon dioxide into stone using their energy-intensive technology. We also had a debate with the Minister for the Environment, where we discussed, for example, why solar power plants are used in Iceland when it is very dark. There was also a lecture by specialists on looking at renewable energy. After the lectures, we went to the National Museum where we saw the bones of the first inhabitants of Iceland and also the Icelandic Book, which is a book that lists the family tree of the inhabitants so that people know who they are related to and who they can relate to.

On Friday in Iceland, there was something called last bell, but the way they do it is that they take some masks, they get a paper with tasks and the classes compete against each other to see who can do the most tasks by 12 o'clock. We joined in this event as well and went around the city doing different tasks.

At the weekend we went to see the Westman Islands, which we took the electric ferry to. There is a beautiful setting on the islands and an active volcano which we hiked up to get a view of the whole island.

Our next week in Iceland was full of nature exploration e.g. the golden circle where we saw waterfalls, geysers and beautiful nature. We also didn't miss visiting the Blue Lagoon and even went to DECode genetics, which is one of the largest human gene research companies. They even let us in amongst their servers, which we were very surprised about.

We finished the project with the FlyOver Iceland simulation and the next day we flew out of Iceland. Again we went to Keflavik, from Keflavik to Munich by plane and by bus to Jihlava. I consider the whole project very successful because I learned a lot about Iceland, met new people and improved my English and communication.

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