

NSC Jyväskylä 2024 (04.-07. January 2024)

Completely unexpected, the EYP-delegation from Wohlen who had attended the National Selection Conference (NSC) in Ticino received an e-mail from Elsa in November 2023. Elsa is a board member of EYP Switzerland and she informed us that we were allowed to go abroad to Finland, more precisely to Jyväskylä, the seventh largest city in Finland. This was a reward for our good work at the NSC in Ticino. Our selection for the session in Jyväskylä was a challenge as three out of four students had never been to a national session abroad and, on top of that, never to such a cold country. How will the students from the KSWO perform and what exciting events can they expect?

Thursday, 04. January 2024

Dusk had already fallen when we met the new faces who had also made the long journey to the freezing city. In the morning, we had travelled by train from Helsinki, the capital, to Jyväskylä for almost four hours. When we arrived, we were greeted by an icy breeze. The 15 minutes in the cold that separated us from the school where the session was held felt like 50 minutes. Luckily, we took a break in a restaurant and had a delicious lunch from a buffet. We noticed that, in every restaurant, it seemed to be usual to offer free tea and coffee for customers. Although we appreciated this, we were able to taste that the beverages were free, so nothing compared to Swiss standards.



Around 2 pm the session started, and everyone got ready in their bedrooms, although you cannot really call them bedrooms as we slept on mattresses in ordinary classrooms. Afterwards, there was the opening ceremony in the school auditorium. Well-known members of the European Union, the mayor of Jyväskylä, the governor of the Bank of Finland and the principal of the school held speeches. They recognised the manifold problems society must tackle to stabilise the future and they put a lot of hope in us as engaged representatives of our generation. Therefore, they were more than willing to provide us with resources and infrastructure. After this introduction, we started general teambuilding with the whole EYP. We played several funny games, like rock-paper-scissors-shoot and many more. Subsequently, we went to the chairpersons of our committees, and they led us to our workplace for the next few days. There we also played a few games to get to know each other better in the committee. Our first day in Jyväskylä was very enjoyable and we met many new and cool people.

Friday, 05. January 2024

On Friday, temperatures reached an incredible -27° Celsius outside, which is also very cold for Finnish standards. It was also very cold in the school building and most people walked around all day wearing several layers of clothes and blankets. We spent most of the day in the warmer classrooms and we worked on our resolution with great commitment. For example, the Committee on Civil Liberties,

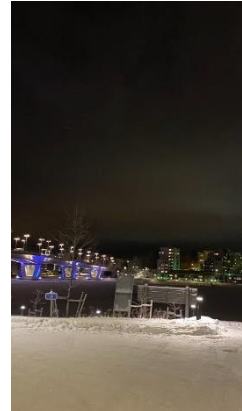


Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) did some activities to strengthen the group, designed a committee flag and discussed some moral scenarios.

For lunch we had sweet potato soup and bread. EYP Finland tried to make it a vegan session – which is not a bad idea – but, sadly, the food was not very tasteful. After the lunch break, we went back to our committees. In LIBE, we started discussing our topics, writing ideas on post-its, and then deciding whether to keep them, elaborate on them, or scrap them altogether. It was a very long and tedious process because we all had different opinions. At around 4 pm the cultural activities started. Unfortunately, the guided tour around Jyväskylä was cancelled due to the cold weather but the organisers had also planned other activities.

Some delegates stayed at the school and watched the Barbie movie and others went to a natural history museum. There was also the option to choose between two saunas.

For the saunas, we needed to walk for about twenty minutes, which was very cold and exhausting under the given weather conditions. One of the saunas had a special feature: you could take a short dip in the lake. There were also three different types of saunas inside and there were whirlpools outside. It was a very cool experience because the sauna culture is much more important in Finland than in Switzerland and we had time to get to know the other delegates and officials better. We even had a quick chat with the President of the session who has attended almost 100 sessions in his EYP career, a true veteran. Time flew and we already needed to walk back to school for dinner. The view outside the sauna was stunning. Notably, it gets dark already in the afternoon at this time of the year – another external circumstance to which we had to get used. In the evening, we had our free time and did whatever we wanted, such as talking with other delegates or going to bed early.



Saturday, 06. January 2024

On Saturday, we woke up to another bitterly cold morning. Despite the freezing temperatures, we promptly set out to work after breakfast to finalize our resolution. Concentrating was a challenge for the members of the Committee on Legal Affairs (JURI) due to the malfunctioning heating in one classroom, which kept it at a mere 3-5 degrees Celsius. Consequently, many of us wore multiple layers of clothing and sought refuge under blankets and sleeping bags.

Later in the day, we successfully completed our resolution and felt a sense of pride in our achievement. Even the devil's advocate, a term referring to a member of the academic board who challenges and attempts to dismantle resolutions, was impressed with the thoroughness of our planning. As a result, only minimal adjustments were needed, allowing us to focus on assigning roles for the upcoming general assembly. Unfortunately, 12 out of 13 members in JURI insisted on delivering speeches or making points during the General Assembly, leaving the delegate from Wohlen represented in this committee with no opportunity to defend the resolution. Nevertheless, everyone was content, and we proceeded to our committee dinner. After relishing a delicious meal, we returned to the school, dressed up for the farewell party, and we happily celebrated the conclusion of our eventful day.

Sunday, 07. January 2024

It was that time again. The hard-earned last day was around the corner, when all the committees had to prove their work at the General Assembly (GA). But before the GA could start, everyone had to pack their luggage and get dressed for a 15-minute run, as the morning was down to -30 degrees Celsius.



When we arrived at the venue, we were given a speech by a member of the European Union. The GA was held at a building of the University of Jyväskylä and therefore the principal of the university also contacted us through video. "Your generation is the future", he said. We then went straight on to the 1-minute silence reading, in which we were able to read through the 2–3-page paper from the proposing committee. They presented it well and their resolution passed. They were not the only ones: at the end of the day, all the committees were rewarded for their work and their resolutions were accepted. Mr. Schneider, our teacher from Wohlen, also sat in the GA since the morning and listened with great interest. He was impressed by the work of all the committees and was very pleased that the delegates from Wohlen took an active part in the GA by presenting, questioning, and defending propositions.



As the day came to an end, there was a session photo on which we tried to capture every all participants of the NSC Jyväskylä. After this exhausting day, the 4 Swiss delegates, Gianna, Janis, Dario and Daniel, as well as our teacher, Mr. Schneider, got ready for the journey back to Switzerland. We quickly handed over our gifts from Switzerland to the Head Organizers and the President of the session and bid a tearful farewell to our newly formed friendships.

Conclusion

The EYP session in Finland was an impressive and unique experience for all of us. Connecting with young and dedicated individuals from across Europe, sharing perspectives, and having fun together was truly rewarding. Participating in an international session, especially in Finland, was a real adventure since none of us had visited the country before.

Initially, the cold temperatures, the food, and the completely different way of speaking posed a challenge to us, but in the end, we managed to overcome it. Throughout the EYP session, we made the most of the opportunity to improve our skills in discussing and interacting with others in English. We hope that many other students from the Kanti Wohlen will use the chance to participate in one of the manifold EYP sessions and maybe experience a trip as challenging and unforgettable as ours. In the end, we would like to say that we are very grateful for the experiences we were able to gain thanks to EYP and all the people who supported us, in particular Mr. Schneider and the principal of our school.

