

Final report by Fabiane Lira

My experience was wonderful, but the beginning has brought me some insecurities and fears. While time was passing, it became one of the most rewarding and full of learning experiences I could have ever had. I am from São Paulo, Brazil, and in this period, that I was in Bronte, I found my home.



Figure 1-View from Taormina to Etna

Projects

EUKI-Project “Frutti per la Biosfera”

In the first phase of this big project, where the German Ministry of Environment is involved, presentations in classrooms were made on the relationship between climate and the food we eat daily. The whole presentation was made in a very didactic way, all this approach about CO₂ emissions and climate was explained among others through a typical Sicilian recipe, “Pasta a Norma”. The children realized how important it is to consume local products and vegetables instead of too much meat.



Figure 2- My presentation about the Frutti project

I started my participation in the Frutti Project in that first phase, preparing some slides to present in schools. In the classroom I gave a brief presentation about myself: my country Brazil and the places I like to go like Ibirapuera Park and my favorite typical fruit jaboticaba. Which was important for the whole process. That part was good for the children too, because later they always remembered where I come from, and it was essential to establish a connection. My favorite part of the project was always working with children. They helped me a lot with Italian and were always curious to know more, they were very participative and collaborative.



Figure 3 - The Frutti project in Mascali

After the presentation stage we began to create vegetable gardens in school yards together with the children. The children have been very enthusiastic and everybody wanted to be active, preparing the ground, seeding and planting. Another stage, which was very important for my contact with the children were the didactic stations. In these stations we explained to the children the relationship between insects, soil, animals and vegetable gardens. At this stage, I and another volunteer were in charge of the station animals, it was very important for me to train the language, and dialogue with the children.

In other phases of the project Frutti per la Biosfera, like farm visits and local markets I did not often participate, as I have been also active in other Giacche Verdi-projects.



Figure 4- Presentation of animal station in Randazzo

Fiumefreddo

In Fiumefreddo I participated in some projects with Anna Spitaleri from the partner organisation Giacche Verdi Sicilia, as “Ricciaggio”, “Fiumipuliti” and “Bioparco Blue Garden”. The last two projects were my favorites. Because we developed several meetings with the same children. They were very happy to carry out the activities outside the classroom, and especially to take care of the garden they had planted. The activities with the children were always fun and educational, with these projects I realized how much I like working with the children.



Figure 5- Activity with children for the Frutti project

And the road between Bronte and Fiumefreddo was always beautiful, with the mountains and Etna.

At the beginning of the project while traveling the same way, sometimes there was snow, and at the end of the project it seemed a totally different place with lots of gymnasts and other flowers. Every time I made this way by train or car and surrounded the Etna I felt really blessed by the opportunity to live here.



Figure 6-View Etna from way to Fiumefreddo

Giacche Verdi

The work is always dynamic, in addition to the projects we carry out in schools, we take care of our garden and our beautiful dog. In winter, when the weather was bad, we watched documentaries that were always good for us to integrate, with subjects that we didn't know very well yet. In addition, we had some trainings and debates with GV on certain subjects we had previously chosen, and this was always very interesting, because we could understand different points of view on the same subject, and always learn something new.



Figure 7-Cold day in the office

The atmosphere here is always pleasant; I feel like a family member, it only seems like work because we have schedules to keep, but if we didn't have them it would be like spending a pleasant time with friends. My experience here at GV was incredible.

As I always considered myself to be focused on environmental issues, I chose to study environmental engineering, and being here made me even more clear that this is what I want for my life.

It was a great pleasure to be part of this family, which works to do what I believe. It is very important to re-establish our balance with nature, to educate children for environmental awareness, and to preserve nature and biodiversity. Many thanks to all who have made my voluntary stay an incredible experience; you have helped me to grow, to rediscover myself and to learn.



I came here a little confused with fear because of the language and also because of the small town Bronte so different from mine. But all this experience was very important.

Being here made me realize that although I am from São Paulo and I love the big city, I want to live in a place like here, with this peace and nature and work with children. Working at GV has changed my way of seeing these things, it's like I've found a lost side of me again. Before, sometimes in the rush of the day, colleges and the routine, I have stopped doing things that once had been so important for me. Here I feel more connected than ever, I meet a very important side of myself here, I understand myself better and see things more clearly. I believe that this voluntary stay will be one of the most important experiences I will have in my life.

Living with different people from different cultures is also one of the most interesting relationships that we live here, I found in GV a family, and friends that I will certainly take for a lifetime, my time in GV is over but I will take forever the experiences lived here.

Voluntary stay in Sicily at
Giacche Verdi Bronte - 2018/19

