

# Tubingen

**Education Week 2023**  
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## 1. *Your arrival in Tübingen/Germany:*

*What was your first thought/impression? How did you feel arriving in Tübingen/Germany? Was there anything in particular, you noticed upon your arrival? What did you see/smell/feel/hear/notice? What was different/similar?*

As soon as I arrived in Germany and took the bus to Tübingen I was thrilled with the route which had trees all along it and no litter on the road. The first street I walked through on foot into town was full of cyclists and little shops which smelled of delicious food from very early on, which surprised me because it was only 11am. When I reached the river I was struck by the beauty of the landscape, the flowers and the colourful houses. Tübingen gave me an aura and an energy that felt soothing and an urge to get lost walking along it. By the time it was over and I could get into the hotel I walked around the centre and sat in a shop to try new flavours. What I still noticed was that all the people even at an older age had a constant smile on their face even if the weather changed abruptly which they seemed to be used to, while for me it was very strange for it to rain in the summer months, as well as And the small children playing in the street freely and happily without being restricted by a possible rain. So my first hours in the city I enjoyed its magic trying to observe as much as possible either the people or the environment. It is very important that they respect nature and their city and keep it so green and clean. The energy of this place captivated me from the first minute and so I sat on a bench after dinner and enjoyed the view of the river, the people walking around, saw insects I had never seen before and let them walk all over me and talked on the phone with my friends in Athens to express my excitement. Finally what struck me was that the shops were closing very early, even though it was Sunday, and people were moving less which is the opposite in my country, as there the walks start in the evening. However this peace I felt walking from the restaurant we all went to to the hotel listening to the water from small rivers , the wind in the leaves and the little light on the street was something that enchanted me and I relaxed completely. Overall from the very first day I loved the way of life in this city as well as the mood of the people.

## 2. Emphasize on one topic:

*a. Critical Incident: Describe a funny, misunderstanding, surprising or irritating situation you have experienced with Germans/other international students.*

*b. Discuss with a peer student on your different education system.*

a. One incident I experienced with a German classmate of mine which I would describe as funny and a bit embarrassing was that because we participated together in many activities during the lessons we became friends. In Greece the way we greet our friends is quite warm by touching them, I spontaneously reacted as I had learned, which is probably not so common in this nationality. On the one hand it was a bit awkward as to my colleague it seemed a bit strange, but without saying anything and making me feel uncomfortable. Meanwhile in my country there is a stereotypical opinion about Germans that they are not so friendly and are more distant, which is not confirmed as everyone was very friendly, but thinking about conversations with my friends in Athens it was a bit weird and funny (in a good way) the difference of our cultures even in the way we greet each other.

b. Many discussions took place around our education systems and the differences between countries. In particular, talking to a classmate of mine from France, many things in the schools were common, but what struck him and shocked him was that in my country the ministry of education is shared with the ministry of religion and that every morning before classes start in the school the Christian Orthodox prayer is done by all students, ignoring and without any alternative in case some students have a different religion. Similarly with the religious education lesson the children are required to attend for the religion prevailing in Greece and if they want to get an exemption it is even noted on their school leaving certificate. Therefore, he was extremely surprised and shocked that children of other religions are forced to attend prayers and classes for a religion that does not suit them and there is no solution for them.



*3. Which experience abroad will be helpful for being a (better/different) teacher (regarding global awareness/ culture/ communication/ education/ interaction...)?*

All the children who participated were consciously there and as a result they had an appetite and love for teaching and this made us During the lessons, and not only, to exchange thoughts, ideas and new suggestions-methods that can help me in my own teaching. Many discussions and games within the course brought us closer together by exchanging views on different cultures creating a more aware environment that recognizes that teaching is a very powerful process and can do wonders for children and teachers. In all the exercises carried out together with all the children, each one added something different, coming from a different culture and educational system and as a result it was very impressive and different from what I am used to at my university in Greece. All the things we shared around teaching were new things that I probably would not have encountered. I also saw a lot of different things that apply to education in different countries and I would like them to apply in my own country. So from my side and as much as I can I will try to change some things in terms of organization and education in order to improve the children's progress.



*4. Why/How can your future students profit from your experience abroad?*

As I mentioned before, the activities we did in the lessons were so many that I learned teaching methods I didn't know and by applying them to my students they can benefit emotionally, cognitively, and socially with the ultimate goal of holistic development. In addition, interacting with so many children from other cultures has shown me the essence of diversity so that I can more empathetically address diversity in my classroom. By keeping in touch with these children we can benefit educationally by carrying out international projects and collaborations so that my students can see the world with different eyes than what they are used to in the closed society of Greece. I am grateful to have participated in such a project with the benefits being educational and human.

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THANK YOU